

HOLIDAY OUTINGS

BY
MRS. BROWN



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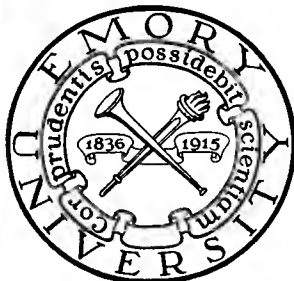
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MRS. BROWN'S "OLLIDAY OUTINS."



INTRODUCTION.

As I were a-sayin' to Brown, it ain't no use a-stop-pin' at 'ome till you're reg'lar blue mouldered, as the sayin' is, and I'm sure it's better to wear out thar to rust out, and for my part I should like to die in arnest, as the sayin' is, afore I'd lay down and give in. So I says, I certingly shall go out a bit this ere Easter and Whitsun time as is comin' on, afore the weather gets that 'ot as is brilin' work a-gettin' about and a-turnin' a toil into a pleasure, as the sayin' is.

So Brown, he says, a-pullin' me up quite short over his pipe as he were a-reloadin', for if in his mouth, bless you, I might 'ave knocked my 'ead agin fifty stone walls runnin' without 'im a-stoppin' me, but thro' not bein' a-smokin' at the hinstant, he says, "That's right, go and run your 'ead agin a stone wall."

I says, "Wotever for?"

"Why," he says, "with your sayin' is as ain't the sayin' at all, as is thro' doin' wot you gets yourself made a reg'lar larfin-stock on."

I says, "Mr. Brown, when you sees me in the stocks a-larfin, then you may larf too; as no doubt you would, thro' it bein' your 'abits to jeer at your lawful wife."

"Oh!" he says, "all right, if you likes to make mistakes, do it and welcome; only don't lug me into none of your goin's on."

I says, "There's no fear of that, or you'd 'ave interfered and took and kicked that low-lived waggerbone as took and sent me synonymus letter, as was the same thing as if he'd signed 'is name thro' kuowin' the writin', as I'm sure is that scrawl and not worth a peuny a line, as is wot I'm told they pays sich fellers, as is reg'lar cadgers."

Says Brown, "'Owever were I to interfere atween you, when I never set eyes on the feller, as you sold all that cupboard full of rubbish to, and I told you as they'd let you in."

"Ah!" I says, "you're werry wise, you are, as can always tell what happened to-morrer the day arter; but," I says, "I ain't a-goin' to talk about no disagreeables, but only gives you fair warnin's as I'm a-goin' to 'ave some reg'lar outins, I am, along with Mrs. Manders and her two boys as is a-comin' 'ome, and Mrs. Bulpits, as is own aunt to

Eliza Jane's 'usband thro' bein' by different fathers ; and there's Mrs. Clagorn, as 'ave promised to make one, with 'er own sister's child, as is always a cheerful companion thro' bein' deaf and dumb, but as full of 'er fun as tho' she got 'er eyesight without a clump foot, as don't 'inder 'er from gettin' about, tho' painful to others, partikler in a bus, thro' in course not a-feelin' when she 'ave a 'uman corn under it."

Not as I considers it actin' like a Christshun to use sich langwidge over afflictions as that old man a-comin' from the Blackwall station in a white 'at and silver spectacles, as wished the 'ole lot on us a deal 'otter than we was, for all as we'd 'urried to ketch the last one arter drinkin' tea with poor dear Mrs. Alders, as I little thought were the last time as I ever should, tho' I must say as I wished her good-night with a 'cavy 'art, but never did think as she'd 'ave gone to live at Brummagem with her married dorter afore a month were over 'er 'ead, as only shows 'ow little we knows wot's a-goin' to 'appen afore the day's out a-gettin' up in the mornin'.

So Brown he says, "Go where you like in welcome, only don't be a-gettin' into no rows and then a-lookin' to me for to bail you out, cos do it I won't."

I says, "Mr. Brown, I'd thank you not to talk

about your lawful wife as tho' bilge water, as must be baled out, in course, or will swamp the boat, we all knows; but," I says, "if I gets into trouble I'll get out on it agin, as I 'ave done scores of times afore without your 'elp; and as to your pity, I don't want that not from you nor nobody else in this world, as is a place where parties would a deal sooner 'ave to pity you than wish you joy, thro' bein' that full of spite and envy, as I considers a mean thing; and when I see Mrs. Glossop turn out that fust Sunday in a four-wheel shay, with feathers in her bonnet, arter 'er 'usband 'ad 'ad that slice of luck as brought 'im in five thousand pounds unexpected, I wasn't one to stand at the winder and jeer, nor yet to 'old back when brought 'ome on a stretcher that same evenin' thro' the 'orse a-holtin' agin Stratford Church, as locked the wheel in a Mile End bus close agin the Coborn Arms, but went over directly for to see wot were to be done, as was more rum and water than concussion of the brain, and so I told the doctor, as constant cold cloths to the 'ead proved my words true, tho' I never did see a man wuss cut about the face than Glossop 'isself, as were took to the London 'ospital, and wouldn't 'ave 'ad a feature left but for diaculum plaster put on that prompt as closed up 'is mouth pretty nigh, thro' a cut in the under lip, as taught 'im a lesson not to go a-drivin' agin with

the reins under the 'orse's tail as set 'er a-kickin', as is why I never would go out easy with a 'ired one, thro' bein' that uncertain tempers, as is as much as your life is worth to set behind even with four wheels; for as to two, I considers it certain death without a chance of gettin' over the back and droppin', as them as is active can do. Not as it would suit me any better than that time as the 'orse run away with us on Shooter's 'Ill, as were a four-wheeled buggy as Mr. Elwis as is my own brother-in-law come from Australier were a-drivin', and says to me, 'Martha, get over the back for I can't 'old 'im in,' as is wot 'is wife did in a jiffey, thro' bein' a mere wisp, as the sayin' is, as is werry different to me, but yet thro, always a-follerin' orders, over I get, a-'angin' on to that back seat as I tore out by the roots with a tremenjous crash, as broke my fall, tho' left a-layin' on my back with me still a-clingin' to it, as sent the rest of the vehicle on with that rush, as made him run into a 'edge, as in course stopped 'im short and sent my brother-in-law slap over 'is 'ead, but fell soft thro' bein' only manure as couldn't break no bones, tho' werry unpleasant when out for the day in a new salmon-coloured sportin' suit as is a dressy man tho' a stout figger, and a white waistcoat, as I'm sure nothink won't ever get the stain out on, and so I told her not to try none of them washin' powders; but law! she's too much the

fine lady to look to thinks 'erself, as the laundress took and burnt into 'oles in five places; not as it matters to 'im as 'ave come 'ome with a fortun, and all made thro' 'avin' of a eye to things as nobody else didn't think on over there, and while they was a-lookin' arter gold he took and made it on the quiet with soap and candles and the chandlery line, tho' not wot he were brought up to, as were a boot-closer when a boy, but broke 'is articles somewhere down in the Potteries, as were obligated to levant and married my own sister over there, tho' berried within the year, as is 'ow he come by a second wife, as I always must respect for her be'aviour to my sister's child, as weren't two year old when she married the father, tho' in course it makes a difference when you've none of your own, and I'm sure to 'ear that gal play on the pianner you'd say it were the Italian Opera on your fust floor, and give over a 'undred pounds for one for to take back as were that size as no ordinary room wouldn't 'old it, and wherever they're to put it aboard ship I can't think, for as to the cabin no one couldn't move for it, and if they stows it away, the sea-water 'll pretty soon settle it."

I thought Brown were a-listenin' werry pre-found, as the sayin' is, when all of a sudden if he didn't give a start and let 'is pipe fall, as dashed into hatoms, and he says, "Blessed if you ain't

been and talked me fast asleep, as were a-dreamin' we was bein' run away with outside a bus, with you a-'oldin' on to the knife-board."

"No," I says, "I thank you, none of your knife-boards for me, as will go out like a lady, or stop at 'ome, as is why I ain't a-goin' to the boat-race along with them Graylins, as 'ave 'ired a bus, and is all a-goin' with their ma in the University colours, as they calls 'em."

"Well," says Brown, "if I went anywheres I should go there, as is a noble sight to see them young fellers a-showin' of their pluck."

"Well," I says, "I did say both them Graylins gals nay; partly a-thinkin' as you wouldn't like me a-goin' to be stared at by them two Uniwersities, as is remarkable bold young men, tho' I must say as Cambridge were much more perlite to me one time as I were there, whilst the row as them Oxford men made were downright disgraceful the only time as they ever ketched me among 'em, as wouldn't go agin, not were it ever so."

Well, jest as we was finishin' of our supper and a-talkin', in come Mrs. Graylins, as have been in the livery stable line, and she says, a-beggin' ten thousand pardins, "Mrs. Brown, I've come, tho' full late, to ask you that favour as you will do me in a-goin' to the boat-race to-morrer with my gals and their two cousins, as is up on purpose for it

from close agin Gravesend, and will be dreadful disapinted, as I promised I'd go along with them; and if Graylins ain't been took with the gout this werry arternoon, and I'm in for a good three weeks' nussin' at the werry least, as I knows as won't let no one come near 'im but me."

"Bless your 'art," I says, "Mrs. Graylins, I ain't got nothink to go in."

"Oh," she says, "for that matter there's my bonnet and dress all ready, as'll fit you to a nicety, and if you won't go, Graylins have been and put the kibosh on it, for he won't let them gals go out along with young Harford, nor yet Joe Giddins, though both engaged, without me or you, as is one he've a great respect for."

So Brown says, "Why can't you go, Martha?"

"Well," I says, "in course I can."

Says Maria Graylins, as 'ad come along with 'er ma for to ask me, "Oh! 'ow jolly," and seemed that pleased that I didn't like to say No. So it were agreed as I should be with 'em by seven, as, in course, weren't no trouble to me, thro' a-livin' only two streets off, and me always a early riser.

When they was gone, I says to Brown, "I do think as I shall get reg'lar talked about all over the neighbourhood, and took for a dissepated

character, a-goin' out a filauderin' like a young gal."

"Ah," says Brown, "you may filander as much as you pleases, but you won't never be took for a young gal no more, if you're ever so disserpated."

As is jest like one of Brown's bitter speeches. Not as I took it to 'art, for I knowed he didn't mean it not to 'urt me, and we didn't say no more on the subjc, for werry soon arter supper were over I went off to bed, a-knowin' as I'd a lough day afore me, thro' a-beginnin' that early, as is wot I do not 'old with in the general way, and reg'lar knocks me up afore the day's out.

So in course 'avin' made up my mind for to go a-pleasurin', I thought I might as well begin with a-givin' pleasure to others, as is doin' a good turn, I eonsiders, as always deserves another, as the sayin' is, tho' I'm sure parties don't get wot they deserves in this world, or that wile ussey Martha Torpey would have got 'er deserts for that owda-eious robbery ; and as to a babby at the breast, that won't cover her wicked ways, as proves wot I says about them juries, as is a reg'lar set of donkeys, and must confuse them judges frightful, a-puttin' in their oars when not wanted, and a-givin' of their opinions that free, as I'd preeious soon settle if I'd my way, as did ought to be done away, and preaps

will be now when them New Law Courts is built, as is to reform everythink, not as we shall ever get justice no better done in the new ones than it did used to be in the old, and if I had my way I'd get rid of them juries, and a good many of the judges too.

MRS. BROWN AT THE BOAT-RACE.

It were grizzly grey mornin' when I got up on that there Oxford and Cambridge boat-race, for Brown he said as the tide would serve about between nine and ten, thro' bein' the full flood, as is owin' to the moon a-drawin' of it up from the sea, as is werry sing'ler tho' not more than a many other things when you come to think on it, not as it's any use a-thinkin', for you can't make nothink out of any of them 'eavenly bodies, not as never will I believe as they are bodies at all, tho' they do give 'em their nick names, as is Jupiter and Wenus, as was 'eathen gods as the Jews did used to worship with their golden calves, as only shows their hignorance, not but wot there's a many about our streets now-a-days as don't even worship that; for all them Sunday-schools can do to teach 'em, as is why I 'olds with Oxford and Cambridge, thro' a considerin' as a minister did ought to be edicated for to know wot he's a-talkin' about, and not a-goin' and a-sayin' as black is white and white no colour, as is wot they

calls a choppin' logic, as that confused poor Mrs. Lewes as they lodged with, and made 'er join the Baptists, not as ever she would stoop to be dipped as I told 'er were as much as 'er life were worth, thro' never 'avin' been in a bath in 'er life, and couldn't even wash 'er neck without rheumatics a-settin' in between 'er blade bones for weeks.

I got to Mrs. Graylins' in good time as 'adn't 'ad a wink with his gout all night, and roared out like ragin' bulls at the sight of the gal with the coal-scuttle, not as she were a-goin' near 'im, but never would tolerate it in the room thro' 'avin' of it ouce dropped on 'is foot jest as he were a-gettin' round, and throwed 'im back for weeks, not as he did ought to have struck poor Mrs. Challen with 'is crutch across the small of the back, a-stoopin' to pick up the coals, and not 'er fault, but all 'is own stupid ways a-standin' close agin the door when she come in, a-thinkin' it were 'is wife, and says "Bo," to 'er sudden, to give 'er a surprise sudden at seein' 'im up, as were 'is playful ways as the coal-scuttle pretty soon made 'im larf the other side of 'is mouth, as the sayin' is, and a bruise as big as a cheese-plate on Mrs. Challen's back as wont never work for 'em no more, not if they was to ask 'er on their bended knees.

When I come for to see the things as Mrs. Graylins wanted me to wear, as was made for 'er, I

says to 'er, "Mum, do you after all these years as I've knowed you wish for to see me end my days in a divorce court, for if I was to wear a gown'd like that with a 'at and a blue feather, Brown would no more live with me than he'd take up with Queen Jezabel."

So she says, "You must wear the colours, as is light blue for Cambridge;" then I says, "Give me Oxford, as is more suitable to my time of life than a sky blue. So," I says, "I don't mind a-wearin' the dark blue ribbons, but can't and wont put on that mantle."

But, law bless you, there wasn't time for to trim up my bonnet, so at last I let 'em put me on Mrs. Graylins' 'at with the feather took out, and a blue wail to tie under my ehin, as was fixed into my 'ead with 'air-pins, as Liza Graylins fixed a deal too deep into my 'air, as it turned out in the hend.

I didn't take much breakfast, for they was all fidgetin' and worretin' like mad to be off, but when I were ready and got out in the yard, there stood the bus with four 'orses for to take us.

So I walks to the 'door, and says, "It's rather a 'igh step."

The man as 'ad the care on it, he says, "Full iinside, mum," and so it were, but full of baskets and 'ampers, and all mauner, as reg'lar blocked it up to the werry roof.

I says, "I can't never creep in there nohow."

"No," says he, "mum," and jest then out came young Joe Giddins with 'is whip as were goin' to drive, and says, "Mrs. Brown, your seat is behind me with Lucy Ann on the box."

I says, "Excuse me, Mr. Giddins, I do not mind outside, but climb I can't nor wont."

"All right," he says. "Here, Edwards, bring the steps," as were brought accordin', and up I steps like a greyhound for lightness, and then all the rest got up and set along the roof with their blue ribbons, and full of their fun as is nat'ral for young uns as is out for a 'olliday, as don't 'appen every day.

We certingly 'ad a werry pleasant drive, as were all over the bridges, tho' the wind was that searchin' as I felt blow thro' me werry keen, and as we went along there was a-many others a-goin' the same way, and afore we got to Wandsworth the road was that blocked as got on we couldn't.

There was a deal of chaffin' goin' on all the way, as I didn't jine in, thro' not a-'oldin' with their freedom as kep' it up, and 'ad to speak once or twice to them Graylins gals and their cousins, as were a-goin' it a leetle too fast.

Not as they took it in good part; for I ketched one ou 'em a-pnttin' out 'er tung at me thro' a-lookin' over my shoulder suddin, as in course I

didn't take no notice on any of their ways, not even their constant giggles as they kep' up.

Jest as we was a-crossin' a place as they called a common, thro' 'avin' lost their way, if Jemima Graylins, a-puttin' up 'er parrysole at the sun a-comin' out, didn't take and send my 'at off a-flyin', as were no occasions, for the sun didn't stop out not so much as a beam above a instant.

So I 'ollers out to Joe Giddins, "Stop!" as answered quite sharp as we was late and must get on.

So I says, "Then I'd thank you to let me down, as ain't a-goin' to no boat-races bare-'eaded," as I were with nothink on but my skull cap and a front as goes all round the 'ead, thro' a-lookin' more nat'ral to 'ave a curl or two in the neck, back as well as front, in my opinion.

Them gals was reg'lar a-splittin' with larfture, the same as Lucy Ann and Joc, when they turned their 'eads and looked at me.

So I says, "It may be werry good fun for you, but let me down, for I knows exactly the spot as it's blowed to, thro' bein' behind a bush, and can find it in no time."

So one of them parties come runnin' from the back of the bus when it stoppcd, and said as it were blowed clean away.

I says, "Let me down;" and off I got as clean

as a whistle by the wheel, and makes for that bush, as only proved to be a bit of the blue ribbin a-flutterin'.

I'd been and tied my pocket-'ankercher over my 'ead, so makes my way among them bushes in spite of their 'ollerin' and blowin' a tin 'orn from that bus for me to come back, for I see my 'at a-wavin' in the breeze as the sayin' is, and goes after it, and jest as I got near if the wind didn't take and blow it ever so much fuder, jest for all the world as if it 'ad done it for the purpose, like a 'uman bein' out of spite.

So I took and give a good run for to ketch it, when I 'eard them on the bus give a jeery larf, as I didn't take no notice on, but give a rush at my 'at over a loose stone, as made me pitch for'ard on it and smash it as flat as a pancake, as the sayin' is, as pretty nigh stunned me.

When I'd picked myself up and got the 'at, I turns to 'urry back to the bus, and if it 'adn't been and disappeared from the face of the hearth, as the sayin' is.

Wotever to do I didn't know, so set myself down on a bit of a post like for to straighten out that 'at, as I were able to make look decent, but didn't for the life on me know the front from the back on it, so made a guess and pins it on agin, and off I set to get on the 'igh road.

"I'd got on ever so far when I met some parties a-comin' along as began a-jcerin' at me, a-sayin' as I'd lost the day; so in course I didn't take no notice on 'em, and jest then, as luck would 'ave it, I see a mounted perlice a-comin' on 'orse-back, as I stops 'im and says, "Please, wherever is this boat-race?"

He says, "Not 'arf a mile straight on," and away he gallops, as I don't think were over pleased at me a-stoppin' 'im.

I 'adn't got much further when two young fellers come along as says to me, "Go it, mother, you'll jest be in time if you looks sharp," as made me 'urry on all of a glow, when a werry nice lady stopped me, a-sayin' as I looked that 'ot, and, says she, "you ain't never a-slavin' your life out for that boat-race, surely?"

"Yes," I says, "I am, mum; as I wouldn't miss, if were it ever so."

She says, "Bless you, it's been over this 'our pretty nigh."

I says, "'Ave you met a bus with two white 'orses and a lot of gals in blue on it?"

"Oh," she says, "bless you, plenty on 'em."

Then I says, "Escuse, which way?"

"Oh!" she says, "go on straight and turn to the left; you'll be on the river in no time."

So I thanks 'er, a-thinkin' she must be a idjot,

for a bus couldn't be on the river. I 'urries on, and soon got in a reg'lar crowd, with eabs, and earts, and buses, as was all of a uproar, as the sayin' is.

I asked several parties if they'd seen Graylins' bus, and one old man said as he knowed it well, as were puttin' up close agin Putney Bridge.

So I give 'im a pint of ale, and jest took a sip myself, thro' not a-wishin' to spile my luncn, and got a cab for to agree to take me to Putney Bridge for eighteen pence, as I think were a little on, for he took and drove me ever so far the wrong way and then back agin; till at last he stops and says as he'd drive me to Hafrica if I'd let 'im 'ave only 'arf a pint.

So I says, "Let me out, and you may drive to 'Allifax, as the sayin' is, for wot I cares;" and out I got, bless you, in such a crowd as proved to be close agin a tow path, as 'ad been a-seein' that race, as is downright foolishness parties a-comin' to see by the thousan', and then all over in a minit like, and them young gents a-pullin' their arms out by the sockets, with 'ardly a rag on 'em, in a easterly wind, as 'ave throwed a-many on their backs with infermation as aint no sign of strength, the same as Mrs. Puttick's little gal's eyes, as was all weakness and did ought to 'ave been fed up with bottle stout, and as to that rowin', why it's ragin' madness from

the beginnin' to do it, in my opinion, with such weather as we've 'ad.

I'm sure to see them men a-dabblin' about in the water up to their knees is enuf to give them their deaths, as no doubt 'ave proved the summetry with a-many, as is only fit work for parties like old Simsin at Chelsea Reach, as it didn't matter, thro' 'avin' two wooden legs, as in course when rotted could be cut off at the bottoms, where they was wore, or got new agin if the wust come to the wust.

Jest as I got on that towpath I could see a iron bridge a 'angin' in the hair like, and over it were a-goin' that Graylins' bus. So I 'ollers and waves my umbreller at 'em, but law! I might as well 'ave tried to whistle.

Says a young feller to me, "What's the row with you?"

I says, "I wants to stop that there bus with the light blue ribbins as 'ave jest gone over the bridge, as 'ave brought me to see the race, and be'aved shameful."

"Law," says he, "I suppose you was too much for the 'osses, and so they've put you down."

In course I wasn't going to answer no sich insults, so I walks on; and at last I asks a little boy where I'd got to, as says, close agin 'Ammer-smith Bridge.

I says, "'Owever am I to get 'ome, let alone bein' famished?"

He says, "There's the railway, as can take you anywheres, jest close by."

I was wexed and tired, and give a sigh, a-sayin' to myself then I shan't never ketch 'em up in this world.

Says a old party a-standin' by, as must 'ave been a deceitful old crockerdile, with a tear a-standin' constant in his heye, "Why not take a boat, as would pull you there in no time?"

I says, "Are you sure ou it bein' the shortest way?"

He says, "In course; look 'ow the river bends, as is a reg'lar serpent."

"Oh!" I says, "indeed. Well," I says, "I eertingly should like to ketch 'em up jest to serve 'em out for a-leavin' me behind that rude, with all the lunch, too, as am 'arf famished."

"Oh!" says the man, "you'll ketch 'em up afore lunch-time, I warrant, in my boat."

I says, "'ow much will you charge me?"

He says, "We shan't quarrel about money, for," he says, "I can tell with 'arf a heye as you're one of the right sort, as wouldn't wish a poor mau not to earn a shillin' or two."

"Well," I says, "as far as a shillin' or so goes, I don't mind;" the words wasn't 'ardly out of my

mouth when two on 'em says, "Come," and takin' me by the harm, 'urries me down to the water's hedge, and afore 'ardly I knowed where I was, into a boat they shoves me, drops me into a seat, and away we went.

When I come to look at that boat, it were a nasty old tub of a thing with a large puddle of water in the bottom, as 'ad splashed me dreadful in gettin' in; and the seats was that 'ard and dirty as I says to the man as they wasn't fit for no lady to set in.

He didn't make no answer thro' pullin' that 'ard along with a boy as made me ask wotever he were a-hurryin' for?

"Well," says he to me, "to tell you the truth, mum, there's a lot of rough characters about on the water as comes down from the East-end, as'll lay their 'ands on anythink and plunder right and left."

"Wot," I says, "jest the same as Paul Jones the pilot, as were gibbeted and 'ung in chains down by the Medway, as I've 'eard my grandmother talk on, as were the terror of the oshun?"

"Bless you," he says, "these fellers would rob Paul Jones's 'ead off, as don't fear nothink."

I says, "Not even the Tem's perlice?"

"Bless you," says he, "there aint a perlieeman neither on land or afloat as dare touch 'em."

Then I says, "Wotever's the Lord Mare about as goes swan-'oppin' every year to look arter the river in 'is state barge, as I've seen 'im myself, thro' a-layin' claims to the Tems, as were give 'im to take charge on by one of them hold hancient kings."

"Ah?" says the man, "I've 'eard say as them kings was up to all sorts of games."

I says, "Don't go to speak agin kings, as with all their faults aint nothink to them wile wretches as calls theirselves Republics, as I'd pretty soon put down with a bullet thro' 'em, a murderin' set of willins, as nobody as 'ave got a throat is safe alongside on."

"Ah!" says the man, "and many a one 'as been put out of the way on the quiet," and he takes and pulls wiolent across the river, as was all mud and hosiers, as they calls 'em, not as I ever can understand why, since I never 'eard as they made stockin's on 'em, as is wot 'osiers sells; and thinkin' about that made me feel as my stockin's struck werry damp to the feet, and lookin' down, if I wasn't a-settin' with water in pools over my ancles.

I says, "Waterman, this 'ere wessel of yourn ain't seaworthy, as the sayin' is." I spoke like that for to show 'im as I knowed them naughty ways.

He says, "Blessed if she ain't made a deal of water comin' across."

I says, "I do believe as she's a-sinkin'."

"Here, look sharp," he says to the boy, "pull;" and if they didn't take and pull the boat close on to the mud bank; and then the man gets up and says, "Now, marm, look sharp and step out, or we shall be swamped."

I scrambled out some'ow into all that mud; and if the fellow didn't set down agin and begin for to row away.

I 'ollers, "Hi! stop! Don't go to leave me 'ere in all this slush and slime."

He says, "I'll be back in a minit with a boat as'll 'old you;" an off he goes like mad.

Well, I waited, and waited, and one or two boats come by and looked at me, as asked me where I'd been washed from, and a deal of chaff, as in course I treated with spurn like a lady, till at last up come a boat with three in it, as stopped close agin me, and I says, "Are you come for me?"

Says a man in it, "Yes, in course we are. Wotever are you doin' there?"

I says, "A-waitin' for a party as 'ave brought me 'ere and put me ashore thro' 'is boat springin' into a leak, as might have been drown'd."

"Well," says one of them fellers, as was a

rough-lookin' lot, "it is to be 'oped as he'll soon come back for you, for when the tide comes in you'll be drowned there."

I says, "Wot do you mean? The water don't come up 'ere, as is dry land."

Says he, "It'll be over your 'cad at 'igh water;" and was a-pullin' on.

I says, "For mussy sake, then, take me in your boat."

Says another on 'em, "We can't interfere with no other man's work."

I says, "I'll give you five shillin's to take me ashore."

Says the fust as spoke, "It can't be done under three arf-crowns, 'cos we must pay 'im."

I says, "I agreed for to give 'im a shillin', as I'll pay you for 'im."

Says he, "Come on, then;" and into the boat I gets; and one chap says, "A nice mess you're a-makin' in my boat, as shall expect somethink for cleanin' it arter your draggle tail all over it."

Well, I didn't say nothiuk, only 'opiu' to get ashore; but law! them fellers kep' a-pullin' up and down all over the place, and a-drinkin' beer out of a stone bottle ever so long.

So I says, "Come, I ain't a-goin' to stand this no longer; put me ashore, or I'll inform agin you."

"All right," says one on 'em; "let's take 'er

back ;" and if they didn't begin to pull to that there side agin.

So I waits till I see a boat a-comin' near, and then I 'ollers, "'Elp, murder, thieves!" as made that boat come close to us.

Didn't them chaps look foolish, for it proved to be the Tems perlice, as I says to, "These here waggerbones 'as got me in their boat, and won't put me ashore."

Them perlice didn't say nothink, but two on 'em stepped into our boat, and took the oars away from the others, and pulls straight away from the shore, as we werry soon got to ; and thankful I were to set my foot once more on terrace firmer, as the sayin' is.

I says to them perlice as was a-'elpin' me out of the boat, "I thanks you kindly, gents, and which is the way to Putney?"

One on 'em says, "We'll show you the way—come on ;" and walks me up to a place as proved the perlice station ; and if they didn't say I were one of a gang of thieves as 'ad come up the river a-robbin', and that the fellers with me 'ad been a-gettin' in the way of the race, and all manner.

Says the inspector, "Does any one know anythink on 'er?" and if one of them waggerbones as 'ad took me in the boat didn't take and say as I were a 'old bumboat woman from Horseledown.

I says to the inspector, "It is all false'oods," and told 'im 'ow I'd been served, a-givin' my name and address as I'd got rote on a antelope in my pocket, bein' a letter from Lady Wittles, as showed me to be respectable in course; and the inspector said as he'd heard speak on me, and would not detain me, but as the boat should take me back to Putney.

I says, "For mussy sake, don't let them chaps take me."

He says, "No fear of that." But he says, "'Ave they robbed you?"

I says, "No; though I must say as I thinks five shillin's a 'igh charge for bringin' me off that bank, as in my opinion it were one of their gang as put me on."

He says to the perlice, "Make 'em give it 'er back."

I says, "No; let 'em keep it, for I said as I'd give it, and my word's my bond, as the sayin' is."

Says the perlice, "Where do you want to go?" And when I told 'em, they says, "You'd better make for the Metropolitan Railway, as is jest over the 'spenshun bridge," as they sent a boy along with me jest to show me the way, as were a nice civil little lad with a deal to say for 'isself, as livin' by the water constant no doubt made him that sharp, and wouldn't turn back when we got in

sight of the bridge, but said as with pleasure he'd go over the bridge with me and show me the way to the railway, and thankful I were to give 'im a penny for 'is paius, and to get over that bridge, as seemed like bein' on the way 'ome; not as I ever considers that bridge safe, tho' in course I didn't ought to speak agin it thro' bein' the bridge as carried me safe over, as the sayin's is, tho' that's more as it will do by a many some of these days, and will give way if they let 'em go on it in sich crowds, the same as it did somewheres down in the country; when a clown were a-goin' to sea in a washin'-tub drawed by geese, as in my opinion the geese was them as was drawed to destruction by sich foolishness, as there ain't no fun in, as I can see.

I were that dreadful knocked up when I got over that bridge, and a-dyin' for somethink to take, but all the places was that crowded as I couldn't get near one, let alone the jeers of them parties as kep a-goin' on at me about a-losin' the day and bein' so bedaubed, as made me that wild at last with them dark blue ribbons as I thought I'd take 'em off, leastways, wot I could; for as to the bonnet, it was nothink but ribbons and stiffners; so I couldn't alter it—not even when I did get into a quiet coffee-shop where they'd nothink left but a roll and butter as I jumped at with a

glass of ale, as is all as kep' me alive to the railway station; and when I did get in the train, I thought as both my feet would take and throb theirselves off, and took me to Moorgate Street when I wanted South Lambeth, thro' 'avin' promised to look in on poor Mrs. Stavelins, as is werry bad with 'er cyes, and 'ave been a-longin' to see me for months, and not allowed out of a dark room as I thought were a good oppertunity, a-knowin' as it weren't far off Wandsworth Common, as lays close agin Putney; but I thought it were preaps as well to go 'ome, thro' bein' that draggled, and so I did, and thankful for a eup of tea, tho' not four o'clock, with a egg and a rasher of bacon, as was all I were up to.

Brown he weren't a-comin' 'ome, so I thought as I'd step round to Mrs. Graylins, when a little rested, atwixt six and seven, and take her back what were left of her 'at, and see 'ow the young folks 'ad got on.

When I got to the place all were silenee in the yard, and no signs of the bus; so I goes to the glass door as opens into the kitchen, and sec Mrs. Graylins as were a-doin' somethink at the fire; so I gives a tap at the winder as made 'er turn round, and she comes to the door with 'er finger on 'er lip, as made me think as preaps Graylins were a-dozin'. She beckons on me in, and says, in a whisper, "Where's the rest?"

I says, "I ain't seen nothink on 'em." She pints to the door, as I see were ajar, and led to the room where Graylins were a-layin' thro' not bein' able to be got upstairs thro' the fit a-comin' on sudden.

She says, "Don't let 'im 'ear you, for he's like ragin' lions in pain this evenin'."

Jest then he gave a roar like a bull, woke up sudden inconvulsions as made 'er run into 'im; and then I 'eard 'im say, "Where are them gals got to?"

She says, "Oh, they've been and took a bit of a drive round, no doubt, but will be in werry soon."

He says, "I'll lay a wager they'll get into some mess thro' 'avin' that old Mother Brown with them, a clackin' old fool."

I were pretty nigh knocked off the chcer, bein' that surprised to 'ear 'im call me that, and wuss, as I wouldn't repeat.

Says Mrs. Graylins, a-tryin' to soothe 'im like, "Oh! poor Mrs. Brown is a kind soul."

He says, "That's right. Weathercock turn round, didn't you say yourself——"

"Let me shet the door," she says, "cos of the draft."

"If you let me go I shall die," he roars out; "don't move."

Then arter a bit he says, "Why, I never see

any one like you, the way I've 'ad to stick up for Mrs. Brown, when you and the gals 'ave been callin' 'er all the names you could lay your tongues to."

"Law, father," she says, "you're a-dreamin'."

"No," he says, "I ain't. Why, only last night you said you only asked her to go with the gals, cos you couldn't get no one else, and I wouldn't 'ave 'em go alone, and said as Mrs. Brown were no good, and you said as she were steady enuf when sober."

I can stand a good bit, but not to be took and 'ave my character defaced like that for soberness behind my back in my own 'earin'; so I goes to the room door, and I says, "I wish you a good night, Mr. Graylins, as is misled by others as I shall not stoop to mention, any more than a-sayin' as I've brought back their rubbish, as 'adn't better never darken my door agin;" and out of the place I walks with that old Graylins' hoaths a-ringin' in my ears, as the sayin' is.

I was dreadful put out when I got 'ome, and couldn't even fancy my supper; and was a-thiukin' it were full late for Brown, bein' on the stroke of ten, when in come Mrs. Graylins all of a fluster, a-sayin' as Graylins' gout 'ad flowed to 'is 'ead, and he 'adn't knowed wot he were talkin' about all

the arternoon, and now were a-ravin' for me to tell 'im where the gals 'ad got to.

"Well," I says, "Mrs. Graylins, I'm not one to say a word to them as is in trouble, tho' I must say as thore's many a true word spoke in the gout; but wot can I do for you?"

She says, "Come and toll Graylins where you left them gals."

I'd got on my nightcap and carpet slippers, but didn't like to refuse, so went along with 'er, and certingly Graylins wero that bad as made me think as them gout pills 'ad flowed to the 'ead, as is deadly pison.

The moment he see me he calmed down like, and then bust out a-larfin' at my nightcap.

So I took and told 'im 'ow it were as I'd been and parted company with the bus, and then we got it out of Mrs. Graylins as she'd agreed as the gals might go on to 'Ampton Court, and 'ave a pic-nic with Joe Giddins's aunt, as 'ad a cottage close agin Moulsey 'Urst; so wot with that and me a-pacifyin' 'im, he got off to sleep jest as I 'eard that tin 'orn a-comin' round the corner, as Mrs. Graylins sent the gal to stop a-blowin', and not to drivo into the yard.

I'm sure if they'd be'aved bad to me, them gals was nicely served out, and quite a providence as I didn't go with them, for the bus 'ad run away with

them and been in the river, thro' Joe Giddins bein' the wuss for licker, as 'ad quarrelled with 'is sweet-art, and made love to 'er cousin under 'er werry nose, as 'ad ended in a reg'lar row, and they'd come 'ome more dead than alive with the match broke off, as I didn't stop to 'ear the rights on, and we 'asn't spoke since thro' their gal a-tellin' my gal as they all laid it to me, as 'ad lost 'em the race and spilte Joe Giddins's temper, and that's why I don't 'old with them boat-races, as ain't wot I calls a day's pleasure to no one, and done a deal of 'arm to a many, as I know'd a young man myself as that rowin' settled on 'is chest, let alone others as 'ave 'ad their 'arts pretty nigh in their mouths, as they must 'ave a-pullin' like that, let alone a easterly wind a-blowin' thro' them thin Jerseys, as they calls 'em, as ain't no pertection agin a sudden chill, as is 'ighly dangerous, and was werry nigh the end of poor Mrs. Clackett, 'as took Dover's powders and 'ot gruel a-goin' to bed with seven blankets over 'er, and got out atween twelve and one to let in the cat at the back door as faced the east, and blowed out the light with the fust puff, and never left 'er bed agin for over six weeks, with 'er 'ead the size of a bushel-measure thro' the hairysipilis, as is frightful dangerous, but no warnin' to young Mr. Alderblins, as is hair to a baronit, and lodged with Mrs. Tweenum at Putney, as I told with my own lips

when laid up with the mumps as he'd got a-trainin', when I were a-stoppin' with 'er a day or two, as did used to lay on the sofy and shake agin with them conwulsions, as he said he were always subjec' to, when I was a-talkin' to 'im that serous, and would ask me a thousan questions; but, law bless you, in them days, as is five and thirty year ago, the boat-race weren't nothink, and not a 'undred people to look at it, as is now run into a reg'lar riot as you won't ketch me at agin in a 'urry; tho' some do say as it's a national sport as it did ought to be encouraged; but I don't 'old with no sich wild games myself, as I don't see no sport in.

THE CRYSTAL PALACE, GOOD FRIDAY.

PARTIES all 'as their own ways, but I says to Mrs. Camplin, "It don't seem to me nat'ral a-goin' out a-pleasurin' Good Friday, but," I says, "things is so changed since I were a gal, as well remembers when all the theaytres was closed on Wednesdays and Fridays with what they called roary toriers, as was sacred music, as King George and Queen Charlotte did used to go, I've 'eard my dear mother say, and wore black, as she knowed all about thro' 'avin' a aunt as were in the black ostrich feather-dyein' line, as always 'ad their 'ands full jest afore Lent come in, as is all done away with now, as Queen Wictoria put down 'erself thro' a-goin' to the theaytre in state, when fust married, on Wednesday and Friday in Lent, as were to please 'er 'usban, as were of the German perswasion, and didn't 'old with anythink like them superstitions; so it's a wonder as it ain't been all done away, includin' cross-buns and salt fish, as a many still sticks to,

and I've knowed the Hirish eat without hegg-sance, or even a bit of butter, tho' there's a-many as only eats it for a relish, with a good jinte or a stewed steak to foller.

So when Mrs. Camplin asked me for to make one, I said as I'd rather not if it were all the same to 'er; but as she says, "We shan't never go out a-pleasurin' together no more in this world, aunt," as she always called me thro' 'er father's 'arf-brother 'avin' married Brown's uncle's second when left a widder with three, thro' them all a-goin' to sail for Anstraliar on the Easter Sunday, as I couldn't 'elp feelin' a 'eavy 'eart over, for I know'd 'er from a gal, when my dear mother nussed 'er thro' a brain fever, as she caught one Whit-Monday thro' a-swingin' too long in Battersea fields with 'er 'cad a-'angin' down in a 'ot sun, as melted tho brain, but saved 'er life with bags of ice kep' constant to the nape of the neck, and talked foolishness one and twenty days in a dark room, with 'er 'air kep' cut close constant down to the roots, and dry cupped behind the ears every other day; so in course felt jest like a sister to 'er.

I never did care about that Cristshal Pallis, as is too much the wilderness for me; and tho' that there 'igh level does save you a deal of stairs, it's a dreadful fatigue for any one as isn't as young as they did used to be, and that's why I says to

Mrs. Atwill, as is own aunt to Camplin, over-night, "Suppose us old folks was to jine 'em later on, as it won't never suit me to be out at Norwood by nine o'clock in the mornin'," as was wot Camplin wanted.

So Mrs. Atwill, as is a widder twice over, and in my opinion on the look out for a third, she were quite short, and says, "Oh! dear no, speak for yourself about hage. I wouldn't give a pin to go if I didn't 'ave my full pen'orth."

I says, "Go in welcome, but you wou't ketch me there so early, as will meet you any part you likes."

Says Camplin, "Werry well, oppersite the 'Audel organ at two o'clock."

I says, "All right," and so we parted.

When I got 'ome and told Brown what I were a-goin' up to, he says, "You'll never meet 'em in this world."

I says, "Not bein' born fools, we can't miss."

He says, "All right," and didn't drop another remark, thro' bein' that busy with 'is fishin' tackle, as he always begins with Good Friday, tho' I told 'im, in my opinion, he'd better go to a place of worship, as he said he meant to, and were up afore five and started soon arter, a-goin' down a-fishin' near the Crays, as they calls 'em, not as I ever knowed 'im bring 'ome any of them Cray-fish.

I'd agreed for to go to church, not werry far from the Helefant and Castle, thro' a-goin' along with Mrs. Corrigin, as I've knowed a many ycars, and begins early, as were werry solemn in 'er ways, tho' a kind 'art, as got me to the train jest in time for the fust arter church-time, as opens along with the public 'ouses, and the dinners 'ome from the bakers, as smells werry relishin' to walk behind, specially pork of a cold day, and many a one's only chance of gettin' a bit of 'ot dinner once a week with their children, as is a proud sight for a father to see 'em all enjoy their wittles, as he've been a-workin' 'ard for all the week, and yet there's some as would shet up them bakers, and not let 'em bake nothink on a Sunday, as if that could be a sin, that one or two should work so as dozens may be fed, as is all cant and rubbish in my opinion.

There was a good many at that railway a-waitin' to go, as I took a fust-class ticket not to be overscrouged; but sorry I am as I did it, for there wasn't no room nowheres but in a third, as were five on a side, and dreadful crampy work; but we was all good-'umoured, and so was for bein' that 'ommerdatin' as makes it more pleasant than a-growlin' and a-grumblin' when you're out a-pleasurin'

I do think as that 'igh level takes you all round London, for I seemed never to know my right 'and

from my left, for everythiuk seemed a-changin' constaut from one side to the other; but it were werry pleasant, I must say, tho' slow, and jest on two when I got out of that train, and went thro' a many passages and places into that pallis.

It certingly were a tremenjous crowd, as all be'aved werry proper and quiet, and was that civil, partikler two ladies as showed me the way to the orgin, as is in the transcript, as they calls it.

I never see sich a crowd as there was all round it, and in front on it, as was all barricaded like, so in course I couldn't get near the front of the orgin, and then remembered as Camplin 'ad said some-think about the 'audle.

So I asks a young feller if he could tell me where the 'andle of the orgin was.

He says, "Bless you, it ain't played with a 'andle," and busts out a-larfin', a-sayin' to 'is mate, "I say, Bill, blest if this old gal don't think as it's a grinder."

So a-seein' as he weren't no gentleman, I turns away, and sees a young woman with 'er infant in 'er arms, a-settin' down a little way off, so I goes up and asks 'er if she knowed where the orgin 'andle was.

She says she didn't know, but 'er 'usban, as come up jest then with a bottle of stout for 'er, as shows he was a good 'usban and father, he says,

"Are you sure, mum, you don't mean the 'Andel orgiu?"

I says, "Eseuse me, but I am not in the 'abits of talkin' foolishness, and was to meet my friends jest oppersite the orgin 'audle at two o'clock, as is now 'arf past."

"Well," he says, "mum, you can't get near the orgiu, without a reserved seat, as is all full by this time."

"Ah!" I said, "I've 'eard of their a-doin' the same at theayters, where they lets 'em in panter-mime time afore the doors is open, as 'ave led to a reg'lar row afore now, thro' not bein' fair by them as 'ave been standin' at the doors for 'ours in the wet preaps, the same as I've heard when King George the Fourth were crowned, parties was in the streets all night."

"Ah," says that young man, "and so they did at the 'Andel Festival."

"Ah!" I says, "no doubt they'd wait long enough with a good feed at the end on it."

He only give a bit of a larf, for jest then the orgiu struek up werry solemn, as were jest like bein' in church, partikler when they all begin a-singin' the Old 'Undredth, as they calls it, and parties all jined in, as I didn't consider proper myself, 'eos I says, if it's church let it be chureh, but if only amusement like, let 'em sing somethink else.

I couldn't get anywhere near that orgin, but 'eard the singin' better than I could 'ave expected, partikler one gentleman, as seemed to 'oller tremenjous, so I asks that same party wot it were as he were a-givin' tune to.

"Ah!" he says, "he can give it tongue, he can, as is 'Sound an alarm!'"

I says, "And a werry foolish song too for to sing in a crowd, 'cos," I says, "if any one was to take it, there might be a frightful scrimmidge," as the sayin' is, the same as when the bottom came out of the wild beast show, where my dear mother was along with my own aunt at Fairlop Fair, as give their own father a couple of black eyes in the dark, a-takin' 'im for the bear broke loose, in a watchman's coat, as were a-tryin' to lift 'em out of a 'eap of 'uman bein's as was all 'uddled together, but luckily no bones broke, though poor Mary Ann Slade as walked with a crutch, got it snapped in 'arf, as a splinter on werry nigh run into 'er sister's eye in turnin' over, and a false alarm arter all; as might 'ave ended serous if the beasts 'ad got out, as they 'ave been knowed to do afore now, like the tiger in the 'Commercial Road, as would 'ave ravaged all London over, but for bein' took under a brewer's dray, as he'd run to for shelter, as is a cowardly brute. I've heard say as is in general the way with 'em, as is cruel in their ways, jest

like old Ducket, as were that temper as he'd take and drag 'is grandddaughter round the room by 'er back 'air, and when the doctor told 'im as he'd put 'is elber out thro' a-tumblin' off the steps a-'angin' out 'is blackbird, fainted dead away at the back-door, and wimpered like a infant at the pain.

There was a deal more music and singin' and parties a-clappin' their 'ands, and a-'oorayin', but, I says, "This won't never do for me; I must look out for my friends."

Says that young woman, "Well, for my part, if I'd lost any one, I should set still a-lookin' out for 'em, as must pass by if you stops long enuf for 'em."

"Well," I says, "that's right enuf, but I've been a-settin' 'ere ever so long and not seen a westment of one on 'em, as is a party of nine; and if I sets 'ere too long I may miss 'em altogether, as is a-goin' to hemigrate next week."

Says that young man, "You can't set here till then, but," he says, "you'll be sure to find 'em, I should say, if you keeps near the orgin."

I says to myself, that's all werry fine, but some refreshments I must get, so I wishes 'em a good day and walks round to where they sells refreshments, but, law bless you, talk of feedin'-time at the Jewlogical Gardens, it weren't nothink to the

scramble as there were a-goin' on for food, so I thought as the best thing I could do would be to wait and get a cup of tea with a somethink later on, for I'd give the Camplins np for a bad job, and I wanders about that Pallis in all that crowd as dimsal as the wanderin' Jew in the wilderness, tho' I felt thankful as it weren't to last forty years.

Parties seemed to enjoy theirselves, and I should say a good many on 'em chapel folks, as don't believe nothink about Good Friday any more than the Jews or the Scotch, as I've heard say a many on 'em never even 'eard speak on it, any more than Christmas Day.

I went out in the gardings once, but it were a deal too chilly for me, with a East wind a-blowin' all over the place, and I'm snre a many would get their deaths thro' a clear musling, as it's a deal too early for, the same as white trousers, as I've knowed parties put on Palm Sunday, and rue it with roomatics to their dyin' day, as is treacherous things afore the weather is settled, as you cannot consider it afore May is out.

I don't think as ever I did feel more dull in my life, and only able to get a couple of buns, with a bottle of ginger beer, as was both werry flat and warm, but all as was left at one of them places where they sells refreshments, and glad I were to get anythink.

Some'ow tho' there was so many there it didn't seem jolly, tho' there was some bold nssies all dressed out, as was a-doin' the gal of the period with a pareel of counter-jumpers, as come behind me and give a yell, jest to make any one jump out of their skins, and no fun in it; tho' for that matter I couldn't see none nowhere, but as it were a-gettin' on for six I thought as I'd go and stand near the spot where parties went out at, a-makin' sure I must see the Camplins go by there, thro' a-knowin' as they meant to be 'ome early.

I makes my way to near the pint as I'd come in at, but the crowds 'ad begun, and the way as I were pushed about were downright destruction to any one's clothes as 'ad put on their best, and so I told some parties as was shovin' me about.

So they says then, "Whyever don't you move on?"

I says, "'Cos I don't choose to, thro' waitin' for friends."

"My good ooman," says a serous lookin' chap, "you'll never find a friend 'ere."

I says, "That's my business, and as to bein' a good ooman, I've 'eard say as she were without a 'ead, as I'm thankful to say I've got mine on my shoulders, and the right way too."

He says, "Ah! but is your 'art in the right place?"

I says, "In course, or else I shouldn't never 'ave been rared, for I only knowed one gal as 'ad 'ern on the wrong side as forced 'er spine bone out of jinte, and brought on a squint, as she died under the operation for, thro' not a-bearin' the nervous shock, as is where I considers them doctors is so wrong in makin' parties that nervous as is enuf to frighten you to death."

Says that serous party, "You seems a person of a deal of information."

I says, "I knows my way about."

"Ah!" he says, "and I 'opes the right way too."

I see wot he were a-drivin' at as 'ad a track like way with 'im. So I says, "I 'opes so, for I'm too old to be put in it now."

"Oh!" he says, "say not so, for there is time or the wilest."

I says, "Come, none of this, for I ain't none of the wilest, and don't want none of your preachin', thank you, tho' as I must say as it's the fust time as ever I did come out a-pleasurin' Good Friday, and will be the last."

"Ah!" he says, "a-clingin' to forms."

I says, "I wish I could see one, for my legs is bendin' under me."

Says a sandy-'aired, freckled fieldmale, "Sure ye'll ne'er be a-thinkiu' much of your Good Friday

when your own Queen's a-doin' all she can to put it down."

I says, "My Queen is a deal to respectable for to put down any religion, I'm sure."

Says that party, "I know for a fact, thro' a letter from home, as she's been and ordered a grand ball for her servants up in Seotland this very day, as is Good Friday, just in 'onour of 'er daughter's bein' married to a Scotchman, as she's that proud about."

"Well," I says, "in course if the Scotch don't believe in Good Friday, don't let 'em; but," I says, "I never will believe as the Queen would give a ball Good Friday to the Scotch any more than she'd think of givin' a grand ball to the Jews or the Germans on a Sunday, as neither on 'em believes in. Why," I says, "I've 'eard parties myself try and make ont as she'd 'ave busyness a-goin' on with 'er ministers on a Sunday, as some do say as it were the busiest day of the week, afore she give up a-interferin' in public affairs, as in course is all lies. So," I says, "you mustn't believe 'arf you 'ears, nor nothink as you sees, as the sayin' is; tho' when you comes to think thro' bein' 'ead of tho Church both in Seotland and England, she may do away with Good Friday or anythink else as she pleases."

Well, jest then parties did come a-crowdin' up so, and a many took up the subjec', a-enterin' into

conversation tho' unbeknown, and one feller said as he wasn't no religion; didn't belicve nothink as he didn't understand.

So I says, "Ah! no doubt you're that clever as did ought to 'ave 'ad a religion made a purpose for you, as it wouldn't take a werry deep one for to fit your understandin'," as made some parties larf, so as I didn't want no jeerin' I moves away, and thought as I'd try for a cup of tea, but, bless you, there wasn't a drop to be 'ad, not as I cared much for it, so took a pint of ale and a biscuit, and then thought as I'd see about gettin' 'ome.

I've been in mobs many in my time, and 'ave seen scrougin' and pushin', but they was all child's play to that there railway platform, as I couldn't get near, tho' I could see parties bein' run up and down and werry nigh shoved under the ingins, for jest as I were gettin' thro' the door as leads to it, I were turned back'ards by a guard thro' 'avin' come to the wrong railway.

The work as I 'ad to fight my way thro' the crowd and up them steps, thro' a-goin' the garding way, for get up them other stairs I never could, nobody wouldn't believe; and by the time as I got down agin to that 'igh level it were nearly ten o'clock, and in course crowds a-swearin' and a-drivin' like mad, and parties as 'ad lost their tickets, and some as 'ad lost their friends, and others as

'ad' forgot theirselves, and altogetther it were a scene.

I weren't a-goin' to be squoze flat not for all the railways as ever was inwented, so took and put my back agin the wall, and waited, that dead tired as I thought drop I must; and it's my opinion as I did 'ave a nap, as I believe many 'ave done afore now, a-standin' up the same as the Duke of Wellington, as were caught a-nappin' at the battle of Waterloo, thro' bein' worn out, and would 'ave let the French run away, only for them Prooshuns a-comin' up with their old Blucher, as is the reason why the French 'ave always 'ated them, as I do 'ope will come back and smash them waggerbones as calls theirselt a Commune, a set of cut-throats as 'angin' is too good for.

I don't know 'ow long I'd been a-dozin' when I woke up with a start, thro' a perliceman's bulls-eye a-flashin' in my face, as spoke with a gruff woice, a-sayin', "Come, old lady, if you're a-goin' 'ome to-night you must wake up, for it's the last train."

I says, "Wotever do you mean?"

"Why," he says, "we've cleared 'em all out at last, thank goodness."

I looks round, and there wasn't no crowd, but only a few as was a-gettin' into the train quite quiet, as tho perlice put me into, tho' only second class, as I considers a swindle, and then to take me

to Ludgate when I wanted London Bridge, close on one o'clock, and not a cab to be got till the beginnin' of Cheapside, as took me 'ome, with Brown a-settin' up with the tea-things laid, and the kittle a-bilin', as a cup or two soon brought me round, and Brown were werry kind over it, and never said I told you as you wouldn't find 'em, as is the most aggrawatin' thing as any one can say; and when I did get to bed felt that tired as I seemed to wish as I might never get out of it agin.

EASTER-MONDAY AT GREENWICH PARK.

I SAYS "I certingly should only be proud and 'appy for to jine your party to Greenwich, Mrs. Botley," as were a-drinkin' tea with me Palm Sunday, "but couldn't leave the 'ouse Easter-week not with only one gal in it."

"Law," she says, "why, surely she's to be trusted, and nobody won't run away with the 'ouse."

I says, "Preaps not, but I'll not trust any gal, not as I ever 'ad reason for to doubt any but one, as were 'Liza Pembly, as I took out of the workuss thro' 'er looks, as was that steady, and must allow, tho' deceitful, did stand up for me when attacked."

"Law!" says Mrs. Botley, "'ow were that?"

"Well," I says, "it's a long story, but will do for to pass away the time over tea, as 'appened when we lived out Stepney-way."

"I don't know as ever I were more took abaek, in faet, knocked silly, I may say, as I was that Thursday afore Good Friday, as that blackguard lookin' feller come and asked if a party in the name of

Walker lived with me, as I 'ollers up the kitchen-stairs to the gal, and says ' This ain't no lodgiu'-'ouse for tramps,' as he'd need come a-muddin' all the frent-doorstep with 'is beastly boots jest as she'd been and cleaned 'em down, for I watched 'im a-doin' from the kitchen-winder all up the front garden, as is paved with flags, and I were a-goin' to 'ave oue of them jiggers put to the bell, as is good things for to keep them trampin' waggeberbones out, as'll come to sell threads and tapes, and certingly wonderfully cheap edgin's, and a turkey-shell comb, as you'd 'ave swore was real, for eight-pence.

" It were the oue with the twins, as I am pretty sure, took all thein fine things as I'd got rolled up in a cloth ou the dresser, ready to be ironed, even to the irons down, and it's a mercy as my lace wail warn't among 'em, as it would 'ave been ouly I'd lent it to Miss Bentley, as were a-goin' to a weddin' of 'er first cousin, as lived over by Poplar Church, as never was a favourite of mine, and don't think much of the match, for he's a widderer with five, and she's got the Saint Autuny fire in 'er face, and one leg shorter than the other, as she says was brought on by being taught to dance too young, thro' 'er father bein' that proud, and sayin' as she'd grow up a beauty, and be a duchess afore she died.

"The same as the lady as I've read about when a gal, as sold 'erself to the devil close agin 'Oburn 'ill, as was only a pot-gal, and died a countess, tho' they do say as the old 'un come for 'er that werry night at a ball, and strangled her between the double doors, and tore 'er 'art out up a court as led to Ely Place, as is called Bleedin' 'Art Yard to this day, tho' some don't believe it, and says as they're spectres on the point; though I'm sure they needn't be, for there's lots of gals now-a-days as would sell themselves to anybody, the same as Melia Whitby, as only married old Cornell for 'is money, and used to tell him as she'd dance over 'is grave, as is the reason, they do say, as he went to Yarmouth by water, and was never 'eard on no more, tho' supposed to 'ave perished in a 'eavy gale.

"It's a dangerous coast for gales, as is werry plentiful thereabouts, the same as the 'errin's as they brings up in shoals, as is a rich fish in my opinion, and never won't suit a bilious constitution, the same as Mrs. Makewell's, as the werry sight of a bit of fat would throw in convulsions that violent, as she bit the door-key thro' with 'er front teeth as they was a-tryin' to force 'er month open with, thro' the doctor a-wantin' to get some medicine down.

"As to Miss Bentley a-returnin' that wail the colour of the door-mat, and a-sayin' as it was im-

proved thro' bein' washed in coffee, with two 'oles as you might 'ave put your fist thro' burnt in it, as did used to belong to a lady as 'er own aunt 'ad been about Queen Charlotte, as were a fine judge of lace thro' bein' brought up in that line, and was a-standin' at the wash-tub when the letter come as said she was to be Queen of England, and only shows what may happen to any on us when we least expects it.

"I'm sure things does the same as it did to me that time as I set the back of my cap a-fire one Christmas-day, a-drinkin' tea with Mrs. Childers as always were a dirty beast, and werry nigh my death thro' Charley Bulteel a-throwin' 'arf a tumbler of gin over it a-thinkin' it was water, and must have been a mask of flames in a instant but for old Coulter a-'avin' the presence of mind to throw the hearth-rug over me as 'adn't been shook for months, and the grit in it run down my back, and the dust pretty nigh smothered me, bût no doubt saved my life.

"The shock upset the party that dreadful as they broke up thro' Mrs. Grimsby 'avin' a fit in 'er fright, and was werry nigh the death of Brown's married sister, as didn't ought to 'ave been out, but always would run them risks, and in my opinion a deal too wentursome with all 'er children, as is the reason of Eliza being that bandy as you might run a

wheelbarrow between her legs, and she none the wiser but as I was sayin', that tramp took them things as sure as eggs is eggs, as the sayin' is.

" But I'm pretty sure, tho' I couldn't swear to it, as that feller with the muddy boots as come a-knockin' at the door with 'is Walkers was one of the gang, and so I told the perliceman, as said he could swear to 'im anywheres, tho' 'ard to tell one from the other, thro' all a-wearin' a mustache, as makes 'em all look like foreigners or wuss, as is a set I don't 'old with never since that time as they come a-dancin' on stilts and stole the things off the line, as they could reach easy over the wall thro' bein' that tall and know'd they was foreigners thro' the man a-wearin' ear-rings, as no Englishman wouldn't think on except in the seafarin' line, as is a fine thing if the eyes is weak, but 'ave knowed them a never could 'ave their ears pierced without faintin , and would 'ave been as well for poor Mrs. Brooks if she'd never 'ad 'ern done, for thro' a-goin' to the fair at West End, out 'Amstead way, 'ad 'er gold ear-rings tore out by a gang of thieves, and swelled up the size of a penny roll, and festered frightful, as never will believe as they was gold wires, tho' give 'er by 'er own grandmother as waled them thro' 'avin' been in the family many years, as I've 'card my dear mother say was no better than a receiver of stolen goods close agin the Mash Gate, as did used

to stand close agin where the railway crosses over the Westminster Road, as they will stop the train on, as gives me the terrors for fear it should give way, as would be bad for the omnibuses a-passin' under, and can see the young men a-goin' to bed at that large drapers close by with the naked eye a-settin' in the train, as I've seen 'em myself a-comin' up from Wimbledon, partikler that time as I lost my ticket, leastways thought I 'ad thro' a-droppin' it in my umbreller, and 'ad to pay over agin, and could 'ave got the money back no doubt, but never 'ad the opportunity, and the ticket as good as lost in my looking-glass drawer; but little thought as Walker would come 'ome to me so soon, tho' no falsehood to deny all knowledge on 'im as didn't come to lodge with me for a good week arter that party 'ad asked the gal, as could not 'ave been open and above board, as the sayin' is, or would 'ave come agin no donbt; but when that next Saturday week Mr. Walker come and took 'em, and paid a fortnight down without a murmur, I were surprised and begun to think as there must be somethink in a long stranger in your tea, as I 'ad in threc cups a-runnin', not as I believes in such things any more than the bars bein' covered with 'em; but sure enuf he come, and long he was besides bein' a stranger to me.

"I didn't ask no questions, but somehow couldn't

think as he was in business, and certingly did not like 'is ways thro' a-lockin' the parlour door when-ever he come in, and would set up that late all alone.

"He didn't bring much luggage, but one box as nearly busted the cabman a-tryin' to lift it in at the door, and give that drive with it as upset the gal as 'ad took 'old of the other end, and sent me a-flyin' with the candle thro' 'er a-comin' back'ards agin me with such a rush, and in course couldn't see where she was a-goin' to.

"I've looked at that box over and over agin, a-wonderin' wot it could be, not as I'd stoop for to pry into anybody's locks as is welcome to their secrets for me; but 'ave 'eard 'im a-countin' silver in the dead of the night, as didn't look well in my opinion.

"He lived on pretty quiet for several weeks, and paid as reg'lar as clockwork every Monday mornin'. Jest about Christmas time he told me as he were a-goin' away for a few days, and says to me, 'You're welcome to use my parlour Christmas-day if a family party;' but I says, 'Thank you, no; we are not a-goin' to,' for it was the fust Christmas after Joe was gone for a soldier, and Eliza 'ad married agin our will, so Brown and me was a-goin' to be alone, leastways no company as couldn't set in our kitchen.

"It was the day arter he was gone as I said to the gal we'd 'ave the sweeps, and tidy up the place a bit agin he comes back, and so we did, and it was the day arter Boxin'-day as a knock came at the door, and a feller asks when Mr. Walker would be 'ome, and something struck me as it was the same party as 'ad asked for Walker a month nearly afore he come in.

"The gal she come to ask me about Mr. Walker a-comin' 'ome, as could not answer for certing, for he said it might be Thursday evenin' or Friday mornin', but certingly the Saturday sometime.

"So up she goes, and soon come back a-sayin' as he'd been and gone a-leavin' the street-door wide open, as I says to 'er ain't no gentleman, mark my words.

"I didn't think no more about it, and was a-goin' to 'ave tea, when I 'eard a noise over'ead in the front parlour.

"So I goes up werry quiet and no light, and listens for ever so long, and then I 'ears the noise agin. I says to the gal, who'd just got a light, 'Come up here,' and up she come.

"I says, 'There's some one in the front parlour.'

"'Law,' she says, 'never.'

"I says, 'Come in.'

"She says, 'Not if it's thieves, as I should 'ave fits in a moment.'

"I says, 'You 'ave a fit if you dares, and I'll give you in charge;' and into the parlor I goes, and as I went in see a 'uman boot drawed quick under the sofy.

"The gal says all of a tremble, 'It ain't nobody.'

"I says, 'Ain't it; then nobody's got one boot on,' and I gets the poker, and gives a prog with it under the sofy, and out comes my gentleman with a black mark across 'is nose, as was off the poker.

"He looks at me for a instant, and makes a dash at the winder.

"'No you don't,' says I, a-ketchin' 'old on 'im, 'till I sees what you've been a-takin'.'

"He turned on me like a thousand wild beasts let loose, a-glarin', and says, 'Let me go, or I'll do you a bodily 'arm,' and tries to wrench 'isself away; but I'd got my fingers down 'is collar, so he couldn't.

"I says, 'Drop what you've took, and I'll let you go;' but he only give another wrench and tried to throw me.

"I says to the gal, 'Oller fire at the front door,' but she stood like a stuck pig, a-starin', and says, 'Oh, don't! don't, Joc, don't 'urt missus.

"I was took aback. I says, 'Joe! then you knows 'im.'

"She begun a-goin' on like mad, a-fallin' on 'er

knees, and sayin' as he wouldn't 'urt me if I'd let 'im go.

"I says, 'Give up what you've took.'

"He says, 'I ain't took nothink,' and give me a wiolent jerk as sent me a-spinnin' on to the sofy, and off he was in a crack, a-leavin' 'is 'at and shoes behind 'im. I runs to the door a-'ollerin' 'Stop thief!' but it warn't no use any more than if I'd whistled, and presently up come a perliceman.

"So I says, 'Step in, if you please,' and was a-goin' to tell 'im all about the gal; but she was a-layin' on the ground in that dead faint that I didn't like to.

"So I gets 'im to 'elp me with 'er on to the sofy, and then when she'd come round a bit, I tells the perliceman what 'ad 'appened, and as said he'd give a heye to the 'ouse and went away.

"When he was gone, I give that gal a little 'arts-'orn, and brought 'er round, and says, 'Now, Susan, tell me all about it, for the perliceman will be back agin werry soon, and if you tells me the truth I'll not 'ave you locked up,' as I know'd to be an orphin, without a friend in the world, and not quite seventeen, as the matron told me with 'er own lips at the work'ouse as I took 'er from, tho' agin my rules, for I never will 'ave none of that parish lot; but was struck with this gal as looked that quiet as if butter wouldn't melt in 'er mouth as the sayin' is.

"She didn't bust out a-cryin' and 'owlin', but she only says, 'Forgive me this once, and I'll promise to be a good gal, and never speak to 'im agin as long as I live.'

"I says, 'What do you know on 'im?'

"And she says next to nothink, as 'ad only met 'im a-goin' for the beer, as 'ad got into conversation with 'er, as is the reason I 'ates to send a gal near a public 'ouse; and 'ad met 'er of a Sunday-evenin' a-comin' from chapel, as is just as bad as the public 'ouse for that matter, and if he 'adn't been a-promisin' to marry 'er, and got 'er to tell 'im all about Mr. Walker, and 'is 'avin' money in that box, and so he laid a nice plant for to try the lock, and meant to come back at night and get in at the back parlour winder.

"She told me as she was a-goin' to meet 'im to be married the next day, and a deal more all about it of 'er own accord.

"So I says, 'Now I'll givo you a trial. When are you to meet 'im?'

"She says, 'At nine o'clock by the corner.'

"So I says, 'Werry well, you go and see if he meets you, and give 'im a warnin' that I'll 'ave 'im sent across the water if ever I ketches him.'

"But law bless you, in course he did not meet 'er, as I do believe as it wero thro' 'im a-thinkin' as she'd rounded on 'im as she'd got that blow with

the life-preserver on 'er neck a-crossin' close agin Waux'all Bridge between the lights three months arter she'd married a commercial traveller, as would 'ave split 'er skull, only fell too low and come on 'er back jest agin the shoulder-blade.

"So that's the reason, tho' she's married now, as I never will go out at any of them 'olliday times, and leave a gal alone in the 'ouse, unless some one as I knows can come and keep 'em company, the same as Mrs. Challin, as is as steady as Old Time, but I know'd were fully engaged Easter week thro' a-'clpin' at a Jew's family as keeps the Passover werry strict, with nothink but them large thin biscuits for bread, and is werry partikler about their dishes, as is werry greasy for the most part, partikler the fried fish, as I 'ave been at one of their weddin's, as the almond-puddin's they makes is werry delicious, tho' not a 'olesome thing for to cat 'arty on, I should say; nor yet rum and shrub for a drink, as I considers sickly."

But I says, "Whyever go to Greenwich Easter Monday, now as the fair 'ave been done away, not as it's a place as I ever would set my foot in, and only knowed one party as were downright ruined by, and took to drinkin' from that day, as were young 'Opley, as good a boy as ever trod shoe-leather up to then, but went to the bad, as the sayin' is, and broke 'is mother's 'art, thro' a-

pretendin' as he'd drowneded 'isself to get out of 'is articles, and left all 'is clothes tied up in a bundle jest below Lime'us Reach, as were all a plant thro' 'aving robbed the till, as were the reason it were put down.

"Oh!" says Mrs. Bottley, "we goes to Greenwich to please my old aunt, as lives in the Old Deptford Road, as 'er 'usban' were a purser and 'ad a pension, as she lives on partly still, but 'ave saved money, and don't think as there's a spot on the hearth like Greenwich."

"Well," I says, "and right you are to please the old lady," tho' I knowed as they was espectin' all she 'ad to leave; but that's the way of the world, as the sayin' is. But I says, "I cannot promise for to go."

She says, "Only say as you try, for aunt 'ave 'eard such a deal of you, that nothink won't satisfy 'er but to 'ave a long arternoon, as will be three o'clock where the steamer lands you in front of Greenwich 'Ospital, as you well knows."

Mrs. Bottley she's a fust-rate 'and at perswadin' of you, and set with till quite dusk, and says at partiu', "We shall all be dreadful 'urt if you don't come on Monday, and as for takin' care of tho 'ouse, I knows a party as will come with pleasure, as is steady as a rock in 'er ways, and

will bring 'er work, and you can let your gal go out for the arternoon.

I says, "No, I thank you, no leavin' one person in the 'ouse for me, as is wot I've a dread on ever since the family went out of town near Belgrave Square, and left the old woman to keep the 'ouse as were found eat up by rats three months arter, and no one couldn't tell 'ow she'd met 'er hend.

It so 'appened as Mrs. Challin were not wanted for the Monday, and sent me word as she could come and take care of the 'ouse; so I let Mrs. Botley know, and took a early bit of dinner, and got to the London Bridge steamer in good time.

But I 'ad to wait ever so long, for all the boats was that full, and when I did get aboard one it were like bein' in a cattle pen for crowdin' and I couldn't see nothink of the river thro' gettin' a seat agin the paddle-box, without room to so much as turn my 'ead.

It's mussy as it ain't a long woyage, or I don't think I could 'ave bore it, and glad I was when I did get ashore at Greenwich, for the boat were as lopsided as a rabbit, as the sayin' is.

I wasn't there till jest on four, and found as Mrs. Botley and all 'er party 'ad got there a little arter two, as 'ad been thro' the Painted 'All, as I did not care about, thro' a-knowin' of it well.

I like Mrs. Botley werry well, and so I do 'er

married dorter, and 'er son Sam and 'is young woman in the name of Wells, and a good many more friends as was werry agreeable, but I did not faney the look of the old haunt a bit, as 'ad got a deep-set eye in 'er 'ead as looked into 'er nose, as is always a deeeitful sign in my opinion.

She'd been a little put out at waitin' for me, but was werry chatty, tho' deaf, and says to me, "Why, you've been and missed seein' the 'All."

So I made 'er 'ear as I didn't care about it, as put 'er out, for she says, "Oh! I dare say you knows a deal more than any one else," and give 'er 'ead a toss, but it's true as I do know a deal about Greenwich, as I've been at often and often since a gal thro' 'avin' friends at Redriff, but it weren't no use a-tryin' to tell 'er that.

I've been to Greenwich scores of times, and see the Painted 'All with them lovely paintin's all about Lord Nelson and the Spanish Armada, as were a great wietory over the French, as never was good 'ands at sea, and 'ave knowed 'em suffer dreadful a-crossin' over, so in course, poor ereeturs, no wonders they've always been beat at sea, for I'm sure there's no one as could 'old up 'is 'ead, let alone fight with that awful sensation in the stomiek as some true born Britons as felt themselves, so aiu't no eall to jeer at the French.

"I must say as I always 'ave liked that Lord

Nelson, tho' in course like the rest on us he 'ad 'is faults, but certingly be'aved werry brave, not but wot I considers it were werry foolish to walk about the deck a-showin' 'isself that open to the French, as in course every one knowed in a instant for a Rear-Admiral thro' 'avin' lost a eye and a harm, as makes any one conspicuous, tho' they did shoot the feller like a dog as 'ad killed 'im in the harms of victory; not as that was any satisfaction, tho' in course a public funeral, drawed by sailors in a open car, as I've 'eard my dear mother speak on, as she see it 'erself on Ludgate 'Ill, not as he left chick nor child behind 'im, tho' there were a party as called 'erself Nelson's daughter, and said as she belonged to 'im, poor thing, as weren't over well off.

There's a picter in that Painted 'All of a party as died at over a 'undred year old, as must 'ave 'ad a good memory, but nothink to Old Parr, as were the oldest man as ever lived, except Jerusalem, as lived before the Flood, so weren't kep' alive by 'is own pills like Old Parr, as Mrs. Johnson reg'lar lived on, but never see fifty, poor thing, for all that, thro' werry close waines in 'er leg, as was brought on, 'er mother always said, by too much Op Scotch when a gal, as is a game as I never did 'old with for gals, as makes 'em that bold a-playin' in the streets, but not near so bad as long rope, as were

wot they was a-playin' when we got close agin Greenwich Park Gates, as was crowds upon crowds.

Me and Mrs. Botley's aunt were a-walkin' on a-talkin' friendly as is dreadful 'ard of 'earin', and will wear one of them deep bonnets as you're obligated for to put your 'ead under for to make 'er understand a word as you're a-utterin'.'

I couldn't make out why the old lady took to me so, a-squeezin' of my harm and a-sayin' I were one of the right sort, and a-chucklin' till we'd got away from the rest, when all of a-sudden she give a bolt into a public-'ouse-door like a shot, as in course I follered 'er thro' a-thinkin' she were took faint, and if she 'adn't got to the bar, and orders a pint of Burton with a quartern in it, as made me stare, wonderin' at 'er.

So thro' bein' rayther warn, I takes a bottle of ginger-beer with jest a dash in it for to take off the sweet as makes it more coolin', and I certingly did wonder to see Mrs. Walter's swaller over two glasses of that ale as she asked me to pay for, thro' not bein' able to get at 'er puss, as she stowed away careful for fear of thieves, as is werry much about 'olliday times.

I says, "'Adn't you better tako a biscuit with that hale, Mrs. Walters?'"

She says, "Not a drop moro at present, so let's be off," and out she walks as nimble as nine-

pence, as the sayin' is. Not but wot I think the old lady 'ad got quite as much as she could carry, as spoke a little thick, and would walk all the wrong side, and then when pushed about, made a bolt for to walk in the road, as I didn't want 'er to walk in the middle on thro' a-seein' that game of long rope a-goin' on, as I tried to lead the old lady out of the way on, but couldn't make 'er understand, and so it were that we both walked right 'atween them gals as were a-'oldin' the rope, as tore both our bonnets off in a instant, and werry nigh scalped me altogether, and then the larfture as there was.

Just then young Sam Botley and 'is sweet'art come up, as larfed above all the rest, as 'urt me werry much, for a close line across your face a-bendin' of your nose back the wrong way and a-unsettin' of your teeth ain't pleasant in a crowd; and if it 'adn't been as we was close agin the park gates, and so I were able to turn back and step into one of them 'ouses where they stand at the doors a-offerin' you tea and coffee, with cold 'am, creases, and scrimps, and set myself to-rights, I never could 'ave gone into that park at all.

I were put out with that old Mrs. Walters, as is Mrs. Botley's aunt's name, for she would 'ave it as it were my doin's, as is a reg'lar old fool, and quite 'uffy too, as when she were told as it were not me, but all thro' a-playin' at long rope, if she didn't

say as I ought to be ashamed of myself to want to play at such a game at my time of life.

It weren't a bit of use a-tryin' to set 'er right, for she's that deaf that when once a thing 'ave got into 'er ead you can't get it out agin; not but wot I've knowed parties as was both deaf and dumb as sharp as needles, and am glad as they're a-buildin' a church for 'em Oxford Street way, as the Prince of Wales is a-goin' to lay the first stone on in July, and will be interestin' for to see the minister a-preachin' with 'is fingers.

I didn't want no words with Mrs. Walters, so tried for to make it up with the old lady, and give 'er my harm up the 'ill in Greenwich Park, as tho' not 'igh it's steep, and she wanted for to climb up and look thro' that telescope as is there for to tell you when it's 'igh water at the Nore, and as I've 'eard say as you can seo Windsor Castle and Tenterden steeple thro' on a clear day, and gives the signal for that there ball to drop as is jest over the equator on tho top of the 'ill, as all the wessels in the river sets their watches by, so as they may know tho right time as it strikes twelve all over the world at tho same minnit, as is all the uso as thero is in that 'stronermey, as tells you the time of day by the sun a-passin' over the quarter-deck, as the captin' always takes a sight at with 'is quadrant, and so stops 'im from a-runnin' into other wessels,

as is wot makes fogs at sea that dangerous in goin' to 'Merryker, as I were always of a twitter till the captin' hit the sun of a day, cos if he didn't there wasn't no tellin' where we was, and shows wot a thing it is to travel, as learus you the harts and sciences, tho'. as I often says, can't tell you wot the moon is made on, nor yet wot's the use of all them stars.

We got up that 'ill, that old lady a-talkin' and a-goin' on, as there were lots of parties a-runnin' up and down and a-playin' about, enjoyin' their-selves rational like, as is wot Mrs. Walters said she liked to see, and would 'ave a turn 'erself, as proved 'er in licker; but I says, "I don't 'old with them parties as runs down in a row 'oldin' one another's 'ands, and pulls one another over, as I spoke to some young gals about who was a-standin' close to us goin' on werry bold, as only put out their tongues at me, and run away.

When they'd gone, says Mrs. Walters to me, "If I was you I wouldn't speak to such brazen creeturs, tho' I knowed 'em ever so well."

I says, "I don't know 'em from Adam, as the sayin' is."

"Ah! I dare say you knowed their parents, and so don't like not to notice 'em."

It wasn't no use a-tryin' to make 'er 'ear, and as to lookin' thro' that telescope why it were a

farce, for she couldn't see straight thro' a-squintin' fearful and talkin' that thick, and said as I told 'er she could see the Isle of Man, a confusin' of it in 'er foolish 'ead with the Isle of Dogs.

I walks 'er off from that telescope, for she called the man as 'ad it a swindlin' old idjot to 'is face.

We went a little further on, for I were ashamed on 'er, when I 'eard a shoutin', as didn't take no notice on at fust, but as it come nearer if I didn't see a lot of them young fellers and gals 'oldin' 'ands a-comin' behind us.

I 'adn't no time to pull the old lady out of the way nor yet face round when they was on us, so ketched 'old of 'er tighter, and made 'er run so as to save the shock from behind a-comin' on 'er too sudden; but law bless you, them low-lived characters was all round us in a minit, a-separatin' on us sudden, and swep' us along different ways, a-carryin' me away from 'er like chaff before the wind, as the sayin' is.

I 'ad the presence of mind to set down sudden myself and let' em pass, and then looks round, and the fust thing I see were the old lady a-rolliu' down the 'ill for all the world like Guy Fox in a barrel full of spikes, as they mado 'im do afore he were blowed up with gunpowder on the fifth of November, thro' a-tryin' to upset Queen Lizzybeth

a-openin' 'er Parlyment 'Ouse in state, the same as Queen Wictoria.

I give a awful screem for 'elp, and some one come and 'elped me up, and I 'urries to poor old Mrs. Walters, as were a-bein' supported agin the trunk of a tree.

The moment she set eyes on me she says, a hiccupin' thro' 'er pants, "Oh! you wile, base character, a-leadin' me into such a game, as did ought to be locked up, you disgrace to your hage and sect.

Says a werry manure-lookin' party to me, "'Owever can you reconcile yourself to joinin' in turnin' old age into ridicule."

I says, "Why you must be an idjot to talk like that, this 'ere lady's a friend of mine, as were a-walkin' with me on the quiet a-lookin' at the view, when we was set on by that low-lived lot."

I walks up to Mrs. Walters, as some one had lent a camp-stool to, a-thinkin' as the shock 'ad sobered 'er, and would be glad to see me; but law, to 'ear 'er rave out at me was enuf to make your 'airs stand on end by the roots.

She says, "Get out of my sight, you ain't no friend of mine, and if I could see a perliceman I'd give you in charge, as 'ave lost a gold brooch with Walters' 'air in it, and broke my watch-chain, and oue of my shoes gone."

I says, "And no fault of mine."

But she wouldn't listen to reason not even when we found 'er brooch a-stickin' in 'er shawl, nor when a little gal brought her shoe back; so I says, "I'll wish you a good day," and turns away.

Of all the 'ootin' and 'owlin' as parties set up all round I never did, and some 'issed and cried shame on me for 'avin' tried to rob and ill-use the old lady.

Well, a park-keeper come up, and asks what were up, and they told 'im as I'd been ill-usin' the old lady, as were 'ocussed.

He says, "No donbt," and that he knowed me as one of Mrs. Brittel the gipsy's gang, and would lock me up for two pins if the old lady would give me in charge.

Of all the malicious black-'arted old toads as ever I knowed it were that old wretch, for if she didn't wish 'im to jest to give me a lesson, as she said, and I do believe he'd 'ave done it but for Sam Botley a-comin' up as said it were all right; but bless you that didn't satisfy that mob as 'ad gathered round us, and wanted to roll me down the 'ill with my clothes tied round me by a skippin'-rope.

So I says to that park-keeper, "You'll please to pertect me out of this park, and see me to where

we're a-goin' to 'ave our tea, as is over the other side."

So he says, "You go on, nobody won't interfere with you if you don't with nobody, so walk off."

I felt very much 'urt at bein' treated that ignominerous like, and I could 'ave cried with wexation, but wouldn't give way afore 'em, so walks on with a reg'lar crowd at my 'eels, a-mutterin' their hinsults, and got to that there tea place pretty nigh a-faintin' with the mobbin' and being pelted with horinge-peel, and do believe as I felt a hoyster-shell in my back.

When I got in the place where we'd agreed to tea as I left my thick shawl at, I pretty nigh went off into 'sterrics, things I ain't 'ad not over thirty years, only but for the old woman of the 'ouse 'avin' a large bottle of what she called monium, as were werry like smellin' salts, tho' liquid, and brought me round pretty sharp thro' 'arf-stiffin' me, and makin' my eyes pour with water.

Arter a bit, Mrs. Botley come in all of a glow like a turkey-cock when you whistles, and says, "Martha Brown, if any one had told me as you would 'ocuss my own aunt, and then roll 'er down a 'ill, I'd 'ave gone to the scaffoldin' on your innercence with a lie on my lips."

I says, "Me 'ocuss³ your aunt! Bother your

aunt! a old wixen as took two glasses of Burton ale with sperrits in agin my advice, and then rum and water with your son arterwards; and wot with that and 'er deafness didn't know wot she were about, and 'ave got me into a nice mess."

She says, "You've got the old lady's death on your consunhunce, with 'er as'ma that bad as she've drove 'ome 'eld up in a cab by Sam."

"Well," I says, "livin' or dead, I don't want to see 'er no more, as would 'ave swore my life away; and as to the ale, she mopped it up, and left me to pay, as were sixpence the pint, let alone the sperrits—an old noosance! and it's my opinion as 'er as'ma ain't nothink but liquor, as she's given to on the sly."

Says Mrs. Botley, "Mrs. Brown, take away my character in welcome, as is beyond the reach of your calermel, but do not insult my aunt with 'er back turned, for I won't allow it."

I says, "I don't want nothink of you or your aunt neither, so leave me in peace to 'ave my tea, as shall go 'ome on the quiet, and wish you a good day; and if you molests me any more I shall leave the 'ouse."

She only said she were glad she'd found me out.

I says, "You needn't never try to find me at 'ome no more, for I considers you a low-lived set,"

Says she, "Who are you a-callin' a low-lived set?" and give the table a bang with 'er fist as sent a cup and saucer off a-flyin'.

In come the woman of the 'ouse, and says, "I ain't a-goin' to 'ave no rows in my place, so jest you both walk."

I says, "I'm a-goin' to 'ave some tea."

Says the woman, "No, you ain't, the party as 'ave took this room won't 'ave you; so there's your shawl, and go."

I says, "Bein' a lady, I won't have no rows in sich a place, as in my opinion is a den of wice."

"Here, Joe," says the woman, "come and turn this intosticated old party out;" and in runs a chap in 'is shirt-sleeves, as says, "If you won't go by the door, I'll put you out of the winder."

I says, "Lay a finger on me if you dares;" but, law! he got behind me, and ketched 'old on my two elbers, and run me out, a-drivin' at me with 'is knee, into the street, and the woman throwed my shawl arter me, as some one picked up for me.

A werry quiet-lookin' fieldmale as were passin' says, "Poor old lady, wot a shame!" and she comes and lays 'old on my arm, and says, "Never mind, lean on me, I'll take care on you."

I says, "I don't want none of your care, and

would thank you to leave go of me ;" so shakes 'er off, and walks on slowly to where I see a werry quiet place for tea, as I spoke to the young woman at the door, as said the water were on the bile, and I could 'ave my tea, as I must say I did enjoy with a new crusty loaf and a egg, but, thro' feelin' werry much put out, thought I did ought to take a least drain, so asks the young woman to get me six-penorth of the best brown.

She says, "I'll trouble you for the money, as we ain't got a sperrit license."

I puts my 'and in my pocket, and if my puss weren't gone, as in course were that wile 'ussey as come up a-pretendin' to 'elp me.

I could see with arf a eye as that youug woman didn't believe me as I'd been robbed, so I says, "Tho' I 'ave no money, I've money's worth about me, as is my watch," as I pulled out.

She called up 'er mother, as says, "Oh, no ! it's all right ; I'm sure you'll pay."

"Yes," I says, "but 'owever am I to get 'ome?"

"Why," she says, "I'll lend you arf a crown."

"Then," I says, "you're a friend in need, as is a friend indeed, as the sayin' is."

"Yes," she says, "and wots more, you'd better not make it late, but go as soon as you feels rested, and not by the boats, as is that overcrowded."

So I thaunked 'er kindly, and took 'er card for to send back the money, as would be four shillins altogether; but as to the boats bein' crowded, the railway was pretty nigh as bad, and I never got 'ome till jest eleven, tho' I left Greenwich at jest on seven, and means to go down and pay that good ooman myself, as I don't believe without 'er as ever I should 'ave been alive to tell the tale, for I were that wore out and 'unted down when I got to 'er place, let alone my sperrits bein' downright broke, for there ain't nothink so 'ard to bear in this world as a false friend, as is like a wiper's tooth, as the sayin' is, for sharpness, tho' unseen.

When I got 'ome, there were Brown a-settin' up for me, as says, "Wherever will you go next a-larkin'?"

I says, "Brown, don't speak like that of one as 'ave been your lawful wife over thirty year, and never been give to larks."

"Well," says Brown, "I don't know what you calls larks, but I never knowed your equal for scrapes; but let bygones be bygones; and now I suppose you're arf starved."

"No," I says; "I shall only take a crust with a little something 'ot, and go to bed thankful as I've got a 'ole bone in my body." But I do believe if I were took 'ome piecemeal in a basket, as

Brown would never pity me—not as I wants pity, for that's much the same as bein' despised, as is a thing I never could put up with; and as to Mrs. Betley, she'll never ketch me a-goin' out with 'er agin—not if she went on 'er bended knees.

MADAME TUSSAUD'S REVISITED.

I SAYS, "Go to Madam Tussors, in course, I will," as is quite as good as the 'Istory of Ingland, without the bother of readin' it, as is a job as I always falls asleep over myself, and can't keep my eyes open when Brown's a-readin' to me not always, unless a murder or somethink like that as 'ave got a werry good plan, when I can't listen, as is a-tellin' me about things over meals when I'm always wide awake.

In course, I knows a deal thro' 'avin' travelled about so much, as am not one to go all over the world with my eyes in my trowser pockets, as the sayin' is, not as in course that can be said in speakin' of a fieldmale's dress, escept speakin' metophilly; not as I've ever gone about much of my own free will, but only a-doin' my duty by Brown, as you might as well 'ave no 'ome over your 'ead, but live like tramps in a carrywan, and do your washin' along the 'edges, if you're never a-goin' to stop at 'ome; but as I've always said a good wife should always foller where a 'usban' leads, and

as to bein' twitted about watchin' 'im, I scorns the notion, as were that Miss Ashtey's impidence over in Italy, as I says to 'er, and can call witnesses to prove, "I'm sure if it were me as 'ad to choose, 'ome is 'ome with all its faults, and as to any one a-talkin' about good old times, give me the new ones; for of all the places as ever I did see, without a-wantin' to, it's them cities as was buried in their own ashes, and no wonder, for of all the bold bad places as ever I were in, it's that ere old ancient ruin, as is called Pompey, as we went to see, a large party on us, not as I should 'ave went myself, only didn't want to be crowed over by that Miss Ashtey as is a bold 'ussey as ever wore curls, and a-lookin' that modest as tho' butter wouldn't melt in 'er mouth, as the sayin' is.

She was always a-showiu' off 'er readin', and says to me, "Didn't you never 'ear tell of Pompey, as I remembers the last days on well?"

I says, "I'm sure I've reason to remember 'is last days as were a pet pug-dog of old Lady Weble's, and I'm sure was over three weeks a-dyin' on a cushion in 'er own easy-chair, with cream and chicken constant, like a Christian, as was aggrawatin' to see give to a black-nosed wall-eyed beast like that, when many a child was a-sinkin' for want of it.

"I remembers the beast well, and as nasty a

cross-grained brute as ever waddled, and would snap at your fingers unprowoked, and set up with every night like a fellow-creature."

So Miss Ashtey she busts out a-larfin', and says, "Law bless you, I ain't a-talkin' about no dog, but a old ancient city as were buried many many years ago."

"Well," I says, "if you remembers its last days you can't be no chicken."

"Why," she says, "I never did see sich hignorance, it's more than a thousand years ago as it 'appened."

I says, "Oh, indeed; well then none of my frieuds wasn't there."

She says, "You'll come and see the ruins, as is that wonderfule, for all the world as tho' it 'ad but 'appened yesterday."

"Well," I says, "so as it don't 'appen again to-morrer jest as we've got there, I don't care; but shouldn't care for to turn into a mummy the same as I've seen in the British Museum, as they say was 'uman bein's ouce, and I must say werry 'urtful to their friends' feelin's to see 'em tore out of their graves and made a common show on like that, as can't be called decent burial."

So Miss Ashtey she says, "Really, Mrs. Brown, if you would allow me for to read to you a little you'd find a deal more iutest in what you sees."

I says, "No, I thank you; what I can't read for myself I've got a 'usban' as can read for me."

I wasu't goin' to let 'er cram me up with a lot of lics, as she 'ad done afore comin' along in the railway, and then to say as it was thro' mc a-fallin' asleep and not a-comprchendin', and could take my oath as she read out of the book to me about King John the Third, as were born with teeth, as 'is own mother wished as she'd 'ave dashed 'is brains out when a-smilin' at 'er breast, as all come thro' 'im 'avin' red 'air, as she couldn't abide, and ended bad thro' bein' put to dcath with a red-'ot hiron, and never smiled agin with a harrer in his heye as won the battle, and that is 'ow it come to be as the Pope wouldn't never forgive him for his unnatural conduct, and yet died in his bed, tho' universal detested.

For I'm one as never forgets nothing as I've 'eard, and did used to listen by the 'our to the young ladies where I did used to live, as would read lovely of a evenin', and am pretty sure as I could say it all off at one time like the Catcchism.

Tho' I never could abide Queen Elizabeth, nor yet 'er old waggerbone of a 'usband, as 'ad 'ad six wives afore 'er, and would have nobbled her too if she 'adn't 'ad the presence of mind to 'ave 'ad 'im blowed up in 'is bed.

I must say as I do pity Lady Jane Grey, and always shall, tho' I must say as she didn't show 'er feelin' for to stand by and see 'er own 'usband's 'ead cut off, and never shed a tear; and as to Queen Ann a-marryin' that crook-back as she met a-goin' along the street, right over 'er 'usband's dead body as she were a-followin' to the grave, why 'angin' was too good for them both.

So I says to Miss Ashtey, "I'm one as 'ave read, leastways 'eard read, a deal in my time, so cqually obliged all the same, but won't trouble you no more."

I see as she were put out at findin' as I knowed so much, for she kep' on a-jeerin' and a-sneerin' all the time I were a-talkin', a-tellin' me I were mistaken.

I says at last, "Miss Ashtey, you're a-talkin' to one as 'ave secd life and knowed life afore you was boru, for my own mother remembered well whcu the suvrings was over 'ere, as were born 'erself the year of the riots, and the winders of the 'ouse broke by the mob as was led by Lord George Gordon, who turned out to be a Jew after all? and as to my grandfather, he remembered the Pretender well as werry nigh got the day a-fightiu' for 'is lawful rights, and would 'ave 'ad 'em too only thro' bein' too fond of the French, as I don't care about myself much, tho' a deal nicer than the Germans,

as is a ugly lot, and too much give to baccy and stale cabbage for me.

So Miss Ashtey she knocked under, and didn't say no more to me, and it was agreed as we should go and see Pompey the werry next day, as we did do, and that's why I were that willin' to go to Madame Tussors, as is jest for all the world like walkin' about with them as 'ave been dead and gone for years, the same as you ean go all about them cities as was berried alive in their own hashes, and fancy as you was one of them come to life agin.

What I likes in Madame Tussors is for young people to go, and that's the reason as I took Sammy Wallis and 'is sister Emily, as is but nine and eleven; but, bless you, there ain't no children now-a-days, for as to them young people bein' learned anythink by me, as am old enough to be their grandmother, why, they took and contradicted me flat, while their own aunt, as is only five years my junerer, she listened like a lamb, and says, "'Owever you 'ave managed for to get all you knows into your 'ead, Mrs. Brown, and keep it there, puzzles me."

"Ah," I says, "Mrs. Botley"—as is her name, thro' bein' married twice, as 'er fust was in the cab-linin' busyness in the name of Markshot, but were unfortunate, and took to drinkin', as de-

pressed 'is sperrits that dreadful as were found one mornin' without 'is boots in the Regency Canal.

'Owever she come to marry Botley, as were only a broker's man as were put in possession constant, not even 'er own sister couldn't never tell, as were a total abstainer, and died of the liver complaint, as is often brought on thro' want of drink, as is well known thro' them geese as they makes the pies on over there in Strasburg, with the 'igh steeple to the church as deserved to be bombarded by the Prooshuns for their cruelty.

Well, as I were a-sayin', Mrs. Botley she is one to listen and learn, and when she do ask a question, will take a answer; but as to them young Wallises, they was all over the place, and their old fool of a grandmother, as is Mrs. Cowell, in the widders' cap line, as ain't the busyness it did used to be thro' a many not a-wearin' weeds now-a-days, as in my opinion is only respect, she took and encouraged them children, and I'm sure I never wanted 'er to come, but 'ooked on to us, as the sayin' is, thro' a-takin' tea with 'er dorter, Mrs. Wallis, that same evenin' as me and Mrs. Botley, when we'd agreed to go and see the wax-work, as looks best lighted up, in course the same as 'uman natur' as is all werry fine, but none the wuss for bein' seen to that advantage as is well beknown

as gaslight gives ; partikler as to complexions, as even wax-work will turn yaller arter a timc, the same as Miss Mary Ann Billers, as were that complexion when a gal, as all the world said were paint, but proved false thro' a-turnin' deadly pale over cuttin' 'er finger, and is now the colour of a sponge-cake, tho' never married, as she 'ad a sewere disappointment in 'er younger days, poor thing, in 'im as she were ingaged to a-turnin' out a swindler, as some will, for all as they've 'ad fust-rate edications.

But, as I were a-sayin', it's always a pleasure for to wisit that wax-work, as I've 'eard say a deal on it were brought away from France by Madame Tussor 'erself when she were obligated for to come away thro' that there riverlution as busted out and killed the king and queen, and that's why she's always took sich care of all them kings and queens as to 'ave 'em all in a row, from Queen Victoria downwards, as is 'istory all the world over ; and as to the dresses, nothink ain't like 'em but Queen Victoria's own droring-room, as in course nobody dursu't go into without diamons and feathers a-floatin' all over the place, as Queen Victoria would turn any one out as come into with cleaned gloves on, as she can smell all over the place in a instant.

I'm sure it's worth all the money for to see

that there royal marridge group; as Queen Wictoria would 'ave done, for all as they could say agin it over in Proosher, as is that hawful proud, and a-lookin' down on that 'ere Markis of Lorn, as no doubt is part their hignorance, not a-knowin' as is not a-wearin' no trousers ain't no sign of poverty among the Scotch, as is a free and easy lot, quite Scot free, as the sayin' is; as is jest the ones not to stand that Royal Marridge Act a-crowin' over 'em.

I never see a more lovelier train with such lace as that Princess Louise 'ad on, as looked 'aughty all the while, and not a bit afeard of the Bishop of London, as stood there a-glarin' at 'er like a black peacock, a little dreamin' as ever he'd be Bishop of London when he kep' a little school up a back street in Islington.

That there young Markis looks amiable, and 'ad better act so too, or he'll 'ave 'is royal ma-in-law about 'is cars, as sets there in 'er widder's weeds, with all 'er royal family round 'er, a-lookin' the 'ead of the family, and no mistake.

They all looks werry nice, tho' in course they must tremble for to think as she's only got to say the word, and they'd all be in the Tower of London in a brace of shakes, as many 'as gone to for disobeyin' them kings and queens as did used to be their parents in days gone by, the same as George the Fourth would 'ave done with Qucen Caroline,

only she ran away with Alderman Wood, as they wouldn't let 'er thro' Temple Bar, as caused bloodshed jest arter they shet the doors of Westminster Abbey in 'er face, when a-goin' to be crowned, as was 'er lawful rights thro' bein' 'is own wife, as he'd been and married by Act of Parlyment, and if he 'adn't, would 'ave been sent to the Tower by 'is own father, as were out of 'is mind, and never couldn't 'ave been in it not rightly, a-goin' on so with 'is Royal Marridge Acts, as were a downright shame.

It's all werry well now as it's been done away with by Queen Wictoria, but a nice bit of a tyrant that there old King George must 'ave been to want to go and commit such a act agin 'is own flesh and blood, and a nice Parlyment they must 'ave been as passed it to please 'im jest to spite his brother, tho' he did let that werry brother's son marry 'is own daughter, as my dear mother remembered, Princess Mary, and lived and died Duchess of Glos'ter at the corner of Park Lane, as I've see 'er a-settin' at the winder myself when a-goin' by on the 'Ounslow bus, as is the place as one of them King George's liked best in all England, thro' its bein' so like Germany for dirt and filth.

But law, there was lots of them Royal family as violated that there hact hopenly, as one were George the Fourth 'isself, as told Old Fox as on 'is

'oner he 'ad not married a Roman Catholic, as when that Fox found out it were true, up and spoke, and says to 'im, "Sir," as is the way the toffs talks to Royal families. "Sir," ho says, "you're the greatest liar as ever I knew, except your father," as were speakin' out with a wengeance, as the sayin' is.

But in course George the Ffourth, he didn't consider as a Roman Catholic 'ad any rights, and as to 'is father he said he'd sooner lay 'is 'ead on the block than redress their wrongs he said, as many says they brought on themselves thro' a-hurnin' parties, but if they did, it's took pretty nigh three hundred years for the Protestants to forgive 'em, as they ain't done yet.

I've 'eard a aunt of mine say often as she remembered that Catholic wife well, as lived and died at Brighton, close agin the Pavilion, as George the Fourth built with no winders in it, so as he should not be overlooked in 'is goin's on, as is werry unpleasant, partikler a cah-stand as is close agin the railway there, as stared Queen Victoria 'erself out of countenance.

But law, that wasn't the only one, for there was the Duke of Sussex, as were a-tremenjous size, as I knows, thro' a-seein' of 'is white waistcoats, as was stuff enuf in 'em to make a quilt, as married Lady Augusta Murry, as he deserted base with two chil-

dren, and then married a Lady as Queen Wictoria would make into a Duchess, 'cos no doubt she always considered it wrong about that there Duke of Sussex business that them children as tried to get themselves lawfully acknowledged, and was refused, as I considers 'ard lines, as the sayin' is.

I do 'ope as them Royal boys of ourn won't take a fancy to marry no low-lived parties, as Queen Wictoria won't stand, any more than Princess Beetrice a-tryin' to 'op off with a misalliance, as the French calls it, 'cos if she should, 'er ma 'll be dreadful put out, and in course Madame Tussor's won't 'ave 'er in among 'er wax, as is that partikler, that she took and turned out that there Magilin Smith, as she 'ad there when she were tried for pisonin' 'er sweet'art with chockerlate drops, as is nasty things, in Glasgow and couldn't be brought 'ome to 'er; but any'ow if she did do it she'll 'ave it come 'ome to 'er some days, preaps when she least expects it, tho' she may larf it off now.

I was in a reg'lar twitter over them Wallis children, as I was that afraid would destroy some of them lovely things, thro' bein' sich ones to touch.

The rooms was that full, and I was a-steppin' back, and come full force on a party's toes as wero a-settin' down, as I turned to polergize to, and

proved only wax-work, and then I did go and give a push back'ards to get out of the way of 'urtin' a figger, as proved alive.

I was a-lookin' all over the place for that old Beastmark, when I see a bald 'eaded face in front on us, thro' the crowd, and I says to Mrs. Botley, a-pintin' to it, "That's 'im, a old waggerbone, as you may see by 'is bald 'ead and mustache."

Says that face with a flashin' eye, "'Ow dare you insult any one like that."

I says, "I begs you ten 'ousand pardins, sir," but "took you for Old Beastmark."

He says, "Oh! you did—did you, and I suppose would like to serve me out agin as you or one of your lot did a few weeks back."

I says, "I certingly should 'ave liked to 'ave given it 'im a week or two ago, for the way as he treated the French, but I says, "Now I wish as he'd take and march into Paris, and settle them red wretches."

He didn't say no more, but walks off, and I went on with Mrs. Botley, a-leavin' old Mrs. Cowell for to manage 'er grandchildren, as would get among the wax-worx, and werry nigh turned out twice under my werry nose.

Mrs. Botley ain't a party as 'ave 'ad much time for readin', and were that pleased to 'ave me es-

plainin things to 'er, as in course I could, thro' a-rememberin' a many things like the Duke of Wellington and Prince Leepold, myself, as did used to live in Marlboro' 'Ouse 'isself, tho' not much there thro' a-preferrin' a quiet little 'ouse off Grosvenor Plaece, afore Belgrave Square were built, as did used to be the five fields where wild ducks did used to be shot, in my dear father's time.

As to Queen Wictoria's bein' crowned and married, as were on the same day, why, it's liko yesterday.

Says Mrs. Cowell, who 'ad come up jest as I were a-sayin' so, "'Owever ean you go a-stuffin' 'er up with a lot of lies like that. Why, Queen Wictoria were crowned nearly two year afore she were married."

"Well," I says, "I won't swear as I'm right, but I thinks different."

"Ah!" says Mrs. Cowell, "think wot you likes, but speak the truth."

I says, "Sich is my 'abits, mum," and I turns to Mrs. Botley, and says, "That a-wonderful man that there Dr. Cummin, as can foretel wot's a-goin' to 'appen."

"Yes," says Mrs. Botley, "I've 'eard speak of 'im as 'ave fixed the end of the world for next spring, and pretty nigh were the death of old Mrs. Coram, as is eighty-five, when sho read about it in

one of 'is books, as proved as the Pope were the apopleptic beast, and such a row with 'er-servant, Mary Bryan, as is of the Hirish perswasion, as threatened for to give the Scripture-reader as called the coal scopo over 'is 'ead for a-tryin' to convert 'er."

"Ah," I says, "there he is a-tryin' it on with Mary Queen of Scots, as is the wust of the Scotch, as always were the same, with their Free Church, as won't let any one be right but theirselves."

Says Mrs. Cowell, "That's John Knox."

I says, "Well, and didn't I say so, as 'ave seen 'is 'ouse in Edinburer, as didn't live in much of a street, I should say as looks like the corner of a blind alley."

Says Mrs. Cowell, "As you knows sich a deal preaps you'll tell us who this is?"

I says, "He's called in the caterlog the Archbishop of Canterbury, but ain't a bit like 'im when he come to lay a fust stone down at Wanstead, as is now over two-and-twenty year ago, and time must 'ave told on 'im."

Says Mrs. Cowell, "Why this one ain't been made more than six or seven years."

"Well," I says, "'owever could I tell that, and in course if Madame Tussor goes a-changin' them every time as they're fresh made who is to tell 'em?"

"Ah!" I says, "I'm glad to see 'im agin."

Says Mrs. Botley, "who's he?"

I says, "Why, Lerd Byron to be sure, as 'ave wrote lovely works."

"Law bless you," says Mrs. Cowell, "why, that Garryboldy."

I says, "It never can't be as they've got 'im 'ere, as will be some day in the room of 'orrers along with the other conwix and murderers."

Says a feller werry rude, as stood by, "I tell you what it is, old lady, you're a-givin' tongue too free a-speakin' like that."

I says, "I ain't in the 'abits of talkin' to strangers; but when you've travelled as far as me, my man, you'll know more about that there Grabaldaldi, as is 'is right name, than wot you seems to now;" and I turns to Mrs. Botley and says, "he should go to 'Merryker to 'ear about that feller."

She says, "I never knowed he were 'Merrykin."

I says, "No more he ain't, but set up there in the candle trade ouce near New York, and they'll give you 'is character any day."

Well, I was a-goin' on a-tellin' Mrs. Botley all about them kings and queens, partikler about Queen Annc's bein' dead, for ever so long afore they knowed it, thro' bein' subjie to fits, as is like a trauee, as parties 'ave been knowed to lay

in for weeks, the same as Mary Ann Pilkinton's 'arf-sister, as would 'ave been berried over and over agin, but for a lookin'-glass 'eld eonstant over 'er mouth, as didn't move a feather with 'er breath, and lived to be the mother of seven, and is now a widder, a-lettin' lodgin's at 'Astin's, as shows as we're all born but none on us berried, as the sayin' is.

There was a tremenjous erowd in all the rooms, but all the parties that respectable and quiet a-movin' about that gentle not to break nothink, as in course would be a sin, thro' not bein' able to replae 'em, and eertingly George the Fourth looks noble a-standin' up there in the middle of all them great potentrates as they calls 'em, and 'is eoronation robes, as cost £80,000 as made werry good for trade, the same as the Lord Mare a-puttin' on a clean shirt every day, as keeps things a-goin' and is what I 'olds with, tho' I can't abear no wicked estravagancee, as ends in ruins.

Wot I partikler wanted to show them young Wallis's was the room with all them Bonyparty things in, and 'im a-layin' dead one end of the place and the Duke of Wellin'ton the other, as shows what a leveller death is, and a lesson to young people not to be that ambition as is the ruin of millions all a-wantin' to be the top of the tree, not as it's bad to try and get on in the world, eos

if you aims at the steeple you may 'it the 'ouse-tops, as the sayin' is, and if you tries to be captin'g may die a corporal.

Jest I were payin' the money for the extra room, old Mrs. Cowell she come a-bustlin' up, and says, "Any one would think you was a born fool, Mrs. Brown, to think of takin' them children into that room of 'orrers and murders."

I says, "I were not a-goin' to do no such a thing, but only to show 'em Bonyparty and all 'is old things about the place, as is 'istory, and might 'ave died 'appy in 'is bed, only couldn't never keep quiet; and as to that rcom of 'orrers," I says, "take 'your grandchildren, I don't want 'em. I considers it only right and proper as young folks should see such things myself, as will warn 'em agin them bad ways."

Cos we all knows what it is to do wrong, and did ought to teach it to the young, a-showin' on 'em as they can act bad if they likes, as will be sure to bring 'em to the gallus, and the waxworx as a warnin' in the end.

It always gives me a turn to go into that room myself, and see them ruffins as looks reg'lar 'ang dog murderers, as the sayin' is, and that there man as they've been and screwed into a bath too short for 'im, and then stuck 'im like a pig, as were the hact of a fieldmale, as must 'ave been as bad as

that Mrs. Mannin' in 'er ways a-murderin' a man in 'er back kitchen; but I says to Mrs. Cowell, "If you thinks the sight of them murderers will frighten the children, without a-doin' their morals no good, you keep 'em out."

So I walks on, and into the rooms I goes along with Mrs. Botley, as weren't much pleased for to see them things as 'ad belonged to Bonyparty, as she said she'd read about, but I don't think she knowed much about 'im, and didn't know no more about Waterloo than a hinfant, as she showed by askin' where he lived now, tho' she see 'is heffigy a-layin' dead with the Duke of Wellin'ton a-standin' over 'im, not as he were that mean as he'd take and glory over a fallin' foe, as the sayin' is.

I 'ad a good look at heverythink myself, but didn't stay as long as I should 'ave liked to thro' 'er a-fidgetin' so, and askin' sich foolishness about this here Louis Napoleon bein' 'is son, as I told weren't no real relation at all, as died in 'is hinfancy, and called the King of Rome in 'is cradle, as he was there in wax under 'er nose, and never lived to be Pope.

Well, we come out of that room as I could spend 'ours in alone, and I were a-pintin' out with my umbreller a many as was great ones, like George the Fourth, as is now dust and hashes, as did ought to make us think wot we must all come

to, when we come to a doorway like as a big giant of a sojer stands in front on, and parties come a-rushin' in, and jest as Mrs. Botley asked me who a party were in a milingtary uniform, as I said were Mr. Bright as did used to be a Quaker, so in course when he did turn went quite to the oppersite side, a lusty party in widder's weeds met me full butt and give my umbreller that shove as made me step back, and a chain as there is for to keep parties off of the waxworx ketched my leg and over I went, a-settin' down on the ground among a reg'lar grope of them figgers, as it's a mussy as I didn't smash nothink.

Scveral come for to 'elp me up, as I thanks, a-sayin' as it were a shame as parties as didn't know manners was allowed to come in, as might injure livin' creeturs as well as destroy the property.

Says the lusty fieldmale, "You're a nice one to talk, a-drivin' and a-shovin' about with that umbreller of yourn, and as to destroyin' the property it's no fault of yourn as it ain't all shook to bits, with the eyes poked out."

I says, "Mum, I knows 'ow to 'andle a umbreller proper; you might be civil, I think, arter knockin' me over."

She says, "Me knock you over, woman; why you certingly did throw yourself backards thro' a-chargin' at me with your umbreller that wiolent like a bagginet."

I says, "Me? Why, I got it out of the way a purpose for to avoid you."

"Yes," says the lusty fieldmale, "I knows your game, as did your best to tip me over, so as I might break the lot."

"Yes," says a man, "she's been a-tryin' 'er werry uttermost for to kick up rows ever since she's been in 'ere a-flourishin' that gig umbreller all about; and I 'eard 'er say myself as she were the old party as took and smashed old Beastmark as she calls 'im."

I says "I never did say sich a thing, nor do it neither; you're a wile inwention, that's wot you are."

Up come the party as acts for the perliceman as says, "Come, you'd better walk, as is full of your mischief, for I've been a-watchin' you some time past."

Mrs. Botley, as is a born fool, she began a-cryin' and a-wimperin', and sayin', "Oh, Mrs. Brown, pray don't go on a-defyin' every one."

I says, "I ain't a-defyin' no one, and am actin' the lady, if it wasn't for a low-lived lot as is out for a 'olliday."

Mrs. Cowell she comes up and says, "Ah! I knowed 'ow it would be if you didn't keep your umbreller to yourself and your tongue between your teeth."

Says another, as turned out to be the party as I'd took for waxworx, "Turn 'er out, or she'll do a mischief to some one or somebody. I don't believe as she's sober."

I certingly should 'ave struck that man, and so I told 'im, for I says, "I ain't took a drop more than a peppermint or two."

"Ah!" he says, "no doubt for to cover your breath."

I couldn't 'ardly keep my 'ands off 'im, only but for the party as took charge on the place a-askin' me to step with 'im and esplain wot were wrong; and so in course I did, and if he didn't take me outside and tell me to step it.

I says, "I'll see Madam Tussor fust, as is too much the lady to 'ave any one turned out ignominerously, as knows 'ow to be'ave."

A werry nice gentleman come out and asks wot were wrong, as I says to 'im, "Sir, all I asks is not my money back, nor nothink, but only to wait for my friends as is a-comin' out, and I can 'ear that lovely music thro' the door, as is jest like a ball-room of crowned 'eads, and no one but upper crust parties did ought to be let in to, as low-lived ones would not feel theirselves at 'ome all along with kings and queens as I delights in."

Says that gentleman, "Mum, it is quite aperient as you 'as taste."

I says, "Sir, I've seen some of the fust paint-in's in the world, and in my opinion none on 'em cau come near wot you've got to show, as is the next thing to bein' alive, and some on 'em does actually breathe and move like life; and as to me, as my name is Brown, a-injurin' your waxworx, as fell by accident, I'd as soon rob a church as think of sich a thing, as is that solemn only but for the lovely music as you plays all the time, as you might think yourself among the dead, and for that matter so you are when you comes to think as nearly all is departed."

That party were werry perlitc and said, as it were no doubt owin' to the crowds, as certingly was werry tremenjous, as they did ought to be when you comes to think of the wonders as you sees there the size of life.

I says, "Good-evenin'," to that party, "and I must say as I'd rather come another time when there wasn't so many and then I can enjoy myself on the quiet."

If that gentleman didn't say to me, "Any time, Mrs. Brown, as you likes to come you send me your card, and I'll see as you 'ave proper attentions, for I've 'eard a deal of you," and so I thauked 'im, and wished 'im a good evenin', without a-waitin' for either of them as I'd come with, and got a bus as took me as far as Oxford Circus, where the Bow

and Stratford goes from, and I slep' all the way 'ome in all right, a-larfin' in my sleeve to think as I'd give Mrs. Cowell and Mrs. Botley both the slip.

I got 'ome jest on ten, and knocks at the door without no answer, so knocks agin and agin.

Then I looks thro' the key-'ole, and couldn't see nothink but the darkness wisible, as the sayin' is.

I says, "Drat that woman not to light the gas," as it's well Brown didn't get 'ome fust with 'is key, as 'ates the passage all dark.

I knocks agin and agin, and then I got the pot-boy as come by to try the kitchen winders and the door, but all in wain.

What to do I didn't know, a-thinkin' as preaps that woman bein' a stranger 'ad gone to sleep arter Mrs. Challin left, as were to stop till 'arf-past nine.

Jest then a perliceman come by, and 'im and the pot-boy got round at the back, and a-findin' the washus winder open, got in, and come and let me in at the front door.

I walks straight into the parlour as didn't seem nothink wrong, and then when the gas were lighted goes down in the kitchen as there was supper on the table.

I says that woman's 'ad follerers, and gone out with them; but 'ow Mrs. Challin could ever let 'er cut that weal and 'am pie, more than jest let the steam out, I can't think, as I'd told 'er I'd made

a purpose for Brown's supper, as I didn't expect 'ome till the last train.

I give the perliceman and the boy a somethink, and was a-lettin' 'em out the kitchen way when I 'eard a snort like a pig a-breathin' 'eavy.

I says, "There's some one a-snorin' in among the coals," as made the perlice throw 'is bull's-eye into the cellar.

I says, "Wotever's that all in a 'eap."

The pot-boy goes in and turns it round, and if it wasn't poor Mrs. Challin all tied up with a sheet, and a pair of Brown's wusted stockin's as she 'ad been a-mendin' rammed into 'er mouth to stop 'er from 'ollerin'.

They brought 'er into the kitchen more dead than alive and undid 'er, but that 'arf-suffercated as she couldn't 'ardly speak for ever so long, and not then till she'd 'ad a glass or two of sperrits for to bring the life back into 'er, as 'ad 'ad a frightful shock I could see by the look on 'er.

And a nice 'ow d'ye do it were when she come to tell me as 'er fust words was, "Your bed-room," and up I 'urries, and never in my days did I ever see such a room of 'orrers.

The drawers was reg'lar ransacks, the cupboards bust open, and all the things over the place.

So I says to Mrs. Challin, as 'ad crawled up arter me, "'Owever did it 'appen?"

She says, "Why, that artful wretch of a woman," with a grasp for breath.

"Wot," I says, "never as I'd 'arf took out of charity, thro' Brown bein' sick of gals, and must 'ave let 'em in jest arter she'd laid the supper."

"Yes," says Mrs. Challin, "as was more than one man, and come behind me sudden and throwed a somethink over me 'ead, and then 'eld somethink as were suffercatin' to my nose as took away my senses ; leastways, not but wot I felt 'em a-tyin' me up," she says, "but don't remember them a-puttin' me in the cellar, nor yet nothink till I 'eard you a-knockin', as sounded werry faint, and then I thought as you was the thieves come back, when I 'eard you a-comin' out to the cellar, as if you 'adn't 'eard me should 'ave choked in a minit with them stockin's 'arf down my throat, as must 'ave been there since 'arf-past eight."

We all went into that woman's bed-room as 'er boxes were cleared out, and then I looked at my own things, as was more knocked about than stole, for I've got a 'idin'-place for my tea-pot and bit of silver, as they adn't found out thro' that woman as 'adn't been in the 'ouse a week not a-knowin' of me 'avin' of them things, as I 'adn't 'ad out since she come, as I took with a eight months' character for a well-be'aved widder.

- They'd been and took my velvet cape and

black lace wail, and would 'ave 'ad my Cheyney crape shawl, no doubt, only it were gone to be dyed.

When Brown come in he give Mrs. Challin arf a crown for 'er fright, and reg'lar larfed it off like ; but, bless you, I couldn't get a wink of sleep all that night a-thinkin' as they'd come back and murder us in our beds, and all night long, the same as the Mars' murder, or them room of 'orrers at Madame Tussor's, as kep' a-risin' afore me ; and I thought as I see all them murderers a-standin' round me with their glassy eyes a-glarin' at me, as is a awful sight, tho' werry proper thro' a-showin' of a moral to them as does wrong, as is wot they'll come to ; for I'm sure there's not one of them murderers there as you could indemnify in a instant, livin' or dead, male or fieldmale, and jest as good photygrafts for findin' out a murder, as is where that woman'll come to, but not thro' me, as shan't persecute 'er, tho' I found out all about 'er, as were no more a widder than me, with a feller as 'ad been in the 'ulks, and a sojer, leastways a deserter, as ain't never a true sojer in my opinion, as will always stick to his colours ; but I've 'ad my lesson, and tho' gals is a dreadful trouble, no more married women nor widders for me as were that mild-spoken and never wanted to go out escept 'er chapel sometimes of a Thursday, as said she'd

only one wish as I should 'ear 'er minister, as would renew me, with a tear in 'er eye, a artful wretch, and showed me a letter from that minister as were werry proper, and, like a minister's letter, full of texts, as he never wrote ; for when I called on 'im to ask about Mrs. Saunders, never even 'eard the name, and said as he were deeply grieved as I'd been imposed on, and I says to 'im, "In course I never thought as you'd anythink to do with it, but thought you might get her took to a reformatory, tho' a deal too old for to reform, 'cos I don't believe as it's true as it's never too late to mend, as the sayin' is."

Next time I goes to Madame Tussor's I means to go on the quiet, with preaps a sandwich, and spend the day as I could do with a caterlog ; not as I wants it, for I seems to know all them figgers pretty near by 'art, as is a lovely sight, and ain't see neither Mrs. Botley nor Mrs. Cowell since ; and all the thanks as I got from Mrs. Wallis were a impident message as I'd kep' 'er little gal's silk 'ankercher, as she wore round 'er neck and 'ad give 'em both colds. So no more tryin' to improve children's minds for mc, though Madame Tussor's is the place to do it, and grown-up ones too.

MRS. BROWN'S WHITSUN 'OLLIDAY.

I SAYS go where you please at Whitsuntide, but you'll never get me on to Black'eath agin, tho' I didn't go to go that time as I went but only to please Mrs. Duckett, as I knowed many years, but never could abide Duckett, thro' a-rememberin' 'is goin's on from the fust, and the way as he treated 'is wife, as never seemed like a young man any time of 'is life, and were always called old Duckett even at school, and thro' not a-bearin' malice in my 'art yet nothink shan't stop me from speakin', as I found whether friend or foe, and tho' it's a good many years ago, I will say as if ever there was a brute it was old Duckett, as were my constant words, and 'er a poor little body, as was that tidy as it were quite a pleasure to see, with everythink mended up to the last rag, but as I says to 'er "You'll escuse the remark, but in my opinion you does too much with that 'usban' of yourn, a-spendin' every evenin' at the 'Goat in Boots,' and comin' 'ome a ectorin' and domineerin' for a 'ot supper at

ten o'clock," and 'ad got to do it all 'erself thro' not 'avin' kep' a servant since 'er bit of money was pretty nigh all lost in them railways, as he didn't ought ever to 'ave put it in, and shouldn't if I'd 'ad 'ad my way, for he's a reg'lar fool always a-talkin' about things a-turnin' up as makes me quite out of temper, and I ups and says to 'im one day, "It's my opinion as all as'll ever turn up for you, Mr. Duckett 'll be the hearth for to cover you."

It did put me into a reg'lar rage when I 'eard as she'd been and lost every farthin' down in them coal-minez, as he'd been and dropped the rest into, not satisfied with wot 'ad gone by the railways as was jest on nine hundred pounds, and only seven left and to go and throw it into a coal-pit. Why I'd as lief put it in the dust'ole at once.

But a-'earin' as she was dreadful down, I says to Brown, "I'll go and see 'er, poor soul, as must require comfort with the workuss a-starin' 'er in the face aperient, as is 'ard on any one as 'ave lived in comfort and brought up genteel, as could work tambour-work beautiful and painted welwet when a gal, as looked that nat'ral in bell-ropes as you'd think as them roses could be picked.

But Brown, he says, "Go if you like, for in course you won't be 'appy if you don't 'ave a jaw over it, as if that would bring the money back."

I says, "Brown, if you're a-goin' to deny as

it's a comfort for to talk over your troubles, you ain't 'uman nature that's all, as would no doubt overflow but for talkin' as eases the mind."

So he says, "Well, I only knows as I likes keepin' my sorrers to myself, for you never gets no pity from parties as you tells 'em to, but only thinks you a fool, and 'ow clever they are for to 'ave kep' out of them scrapes theirselves."

I says, "Brown, you're a-growin' downright bearish. Do you mean to say as real friends won't stick to you in troubles?"

He says, "I knows as there's werry few in this world as wouldn't rather 'ear of your troubles than of your good luck. Why it's 'uman natur to 'ate every one to be better off than yourself."

"Well," I says, "if that's your ways, Mr. Brown, they ain't mine."

"Ah," he says, "you're a reg'lar upper-crust you are," and off he goes for to give 'is boots a extra polish as the gal couldn't never satisfy 'im with, tho' I'm sure the blackin' as is used is enuff for a regiment of sojers, not as I 'olds with that paste as is dreadful waste, and nothink like Day and Martin's, as I well remember 'im stone blind, a-buildin' a 'ouse near where I lived a gal, and 'ad a daughter as married the aristocracy, tho' not a party as I should 'ave 'eld with.

I dressed myself quiet a-goin' to see Mrs.

Duckett, not a-wishin' to go and show off fine clothes to that poor soul as 'ave worn 'er satins 'erself, tho' always plain, from a gal, thro' bein' that under 'ung as she couldn't 'old a pin in 'er mouth to save 'er life, as is as well preaps, for a more dangerous 'abit can't be, as was proved by Mrs. Archbut, as died in agonies, with 'er chest as full on 'em as she could 'old, and is showed to this day somewheres at a 'ospital in a bottle of sperrits as a warnin' agin sich 'abits.

As I was a-sayin', Mrs. Duckett was one of them grimy complexions as never looks as if soap and water come often in contract with 'er, tho' a clean cretur about the 'ouse.

It's a good step from South Lambeth, as we'd jest moved to, to Little Chelsea, as is a part I knowed well when a gal, thro' a-stoppin' with my own aunt close agin Battersea Bridge, and well remembers Cremorne long afore it were Cremorno, leastways, all shet up thro' 'im a-bein' too poor to live in it.

I went by the train to Victoria Station, and got a bus right past Chelsea 'Ospital, as took me on to old Chlsea Church, and then walks on to Little Chelsea, and was pretty nigh done up by the time as I got to Mrs. Duckett's.

Poor soul! she was that down as nothink didn't seem to comfort 'er.

She says to me, a-hustin' out, "Don't it seem 'ard for to 'ave everythink took as my poor dear father worked 'ard for?"

So I says, "It ain't no fault of yourn, so bear up agin it like a true-'arted woman," and I says, "you can come and stop along with us for a bit till we sees which way the cat jumps."

"Oh," she says, "I never can face Mr. Brown, as made me promise as Duckett shouldn't 'ave no more of my money, and now he's got it every penny, even down to a double sovereign and a Queen Anne's guinea, as was worth double thro' there never 'avin' been but two made, and one lost thro' a crack in the floor, as the queen 'erself dropped it."

I didn't say nothink, but thought as that must 'ave been gammon, jest like the way as Matilda Somers lost 'er ring as 'er own grandfather 'ad left 'er as 'ad belonged to the Duke of York, with two serpents a-twinin' with diamond eyes, and 'er jest a-wearin' it a-drinkin' tea with Mrs. Freeman and a-showin' of it round, and that old Mrs. Paire, a old wagabone, 'ad 'old of it, and says, "Here it is, my dear," a-'oldin' it out, and jest as Matilda was a-goin' to take it, says, "Oh, you've dropped it."

High and low did they all look for that ring, even down to 'avin' of the dust-'ole sifted twice

over and the carpets up, but not a westment on it could they trace.

So I says, "Mrs. Duckett," I says, "we all makes mistakes, and in course you're only flesh and blood, as is only grass, arter all, as the sayin' is."

She give a look round 'er little room as full of everything, as showed as she knowed better days, and she says, "I don't like the idea of leavin' the place till they turns me out;" and she says, "Touch a rag I won't."

I says, "Your own clothes you've a right to, in course."

She says, "Only what is downright necessities; and as to my bit of plate, and my dear mother's gold watch, they've all been put away for to support us; and Duckett he's gone off now with two sovereigns in 'is pocket, as I've been and put away all my best clothes for, includin' a Brussels lace wail as is worth double the money, as I was married in."

"Ah," I says, "my good soul, things is werry different now to what they was in walue. Why, look at the lovely things as I 'ad as I couldn't get a sovereign for now, tho' what they cost goodness knows was a fortune; but," I says, "wotever is Duckett a-goin' to do when your 'ome is broke up?"

"Well," she says, "it's the work'us as is all

we've got to look to, as'll be Clerkenwell parish, where my dear father paid rates and taxes, and 'eld up 'is 'ead with the best in the churchwardens' pew over forty years lined with green baize and brass nails, and the beadle's staff agin the door with a nob and a image as was solid silver; with a family wault in the churchyard, and iron railin's round where both my dear parents lays, and a brother as died in infancy, and my constant 'ope is for to lay with 'em, as can't never be along of them symerteries a-comin' in, as don't seem Christshun burial to me; and now for to think as it is a parish funeral as'll be my portion."

"Well," I says, "don't fret over that, that's a good soul, for when you're once dead, it can't signify where you're berried."

"Ah," she says, "if my dear father 'ad lived to see it!"

Well, I was a-thinkin' as he'd a been a werry old man as 'ad been dead over thirty years, and died 'ard on eighty.

So I says, "Never you mind; it ain't your fault, so don't go and give way, but come along with me."

She says, "No, I'll stop till they turns me into the streets."

So, seein' as I couldn't persuade 'er, I says, "Well, whenever you wants a 'ome or a friend,

come to me ;" and wouldn't stop to tea, for, bless you, she was that proud as she wouldn't let me put my 'and in my pocket, not even for arf a ounce nor a French roll and butter, was it ever so, tho' I made 'er 'ave a soverin with a deal of talkin'

It must 'ave been six months and more, and I never 'eard a word about them Ducketts, and couldn't get Brown to write, as said the soverin were gone, they'd be sure to turn up when we least expected.

I sent Mrs. Challin over to Chelsea for to inquire about Mrs. Duckett more than once, as couldn't find out nothin' about 'er, but said as the 'ouse was all shet up, and the neighbours didn't know nothing about 'or; so I made up my mind as she'd been an' gone away somewhere like many a flower is born to blush unseen, as the sayin is, and often did used to think on 'er.

Well, it were Whit-Monday two years, as I shan't never forget thro' bein' the werry fust arter we went to live in South Lambeth, as is a dismal swamp in my opinion, tho' not like wot they are over in Merryker, as runs for miles along the rail full of puddles and pigs as the Niggers is so fond of livin' in; I'd givo the gal a 'olliday, and 'ad Mrs. Challin for the day, as is werry good at plain work, and was a-goin' to 'ave new covers for my mattresses, as I'm worry partikler about, and 'ad

got a bit of cold lamb for dinner, when a tap came at the door, and as soon as it were opened I 'eard a voice as I should know among a thousand, "Does Mrs. Brown live here?"

Up I goes with my 'aunds all flowery, for I were a-makin' a gooseberry puddin', thro' Whitsuntide a-fallin' late and their bein' full size, and there who should stand on the door-mat but Mrs. Duckett, a-lookin' ten years younger at the werry least in a musling gown and a blue parrysole, as I 'adn't 'eard tell on over more than a year and a 'arf.

I says, "I am glad to see you, but wherever 'ave you been all this long time?"

She says, "Over in Merryker, as is where Duckett lost all 'is money and mine too, so went to look arter it, as 'ave turned up trumps, and we're as well off as we wishes to be."

I says, "I am glad to hear it, and so will Brown be."

"Oh!" she says, "Duckett's werry different to wot he used to be, tho' cranky at times, and that's why I've come to see you, and pay what I owes you; and when he's gone to Devonshire, as he'll start for Saturday, and he's a-goin' to buy a little property in, you must come and see me while he's gone."

Well, I were that pleased to see her as I didn't care to make no remark about 'im, as I could see

with 'arf a heye didn't want te see me, and I'm sure there was ne love lost between us, fer I never could abide a bene in 'is body, as the sayin' is.

I says, "I 'epes you can stop now you are come?"

She says, "Oh! yes, I come a purpose."

"Well, then," I says, "jest step up and take off your bonnet in my reem, while I goes and pops my puddin' in the pet, and we'll dine at one to the minit, as is wot I always considers the 'ungry time of day."

I don't know when I've ad a more pleasanter arterneon than me and Mrs. Duckett 'ad together a-talkin' ever eld times, with a early cup of tea thre' er a-wantin' to get 'ome by seven, as was clese agin Black'eath 'Ill.

I walked with 'er te see 'er into a bus as would take 'er te the Helephant, as it's heasy to get anether to Black'eath from.

Afore we parted, nothink in this world wouldn't satisfy that geod soul, as 'ad a grateful 'art, and 'ad brought me a real Califernian gold chain aud breoch frem Merryker, but I must ge and spend the next day with 'er; and she says, "Come quite early, and we'll 'ave a walk on Black'eath, and see the 'olliday folks, thro' bein' Whitsuntide."

Well, I knowed as Brown were out fer the day a-seein' a lot of sperryments over by Woolwich, as

he's up to 'is neck in constant, so I agreed as I'd go.

When he come in to supper, and I told him who'd been, he says, "I knowed them Ducketts would turn up, and I do 'ope as now he've got money he'll show 'is face like a 'onest man, and put back 'is wife's, and pay me wot he owes, as is over thirty pounds altogether."

"Well," I says, "Brown, you're a reg'lar nat'ral finnyonium, you are, to lend that money, when I'm sure we 'adn't not thirty pence to spare."

"Oh!" he says, "it went in driblets, and I 'ope as he'll pay it, not as I expects he will, for it's over seven years ago since he begun a-borrerin', tho' for that matter I could nobble 'im for it as 'e've been out of the way."

I says, "If he don't pay you I'm sure she will, as brought me back that sov'rin as I lent 'er done up in a bit of silver paper in 'er glove, for fear she should 'ave 'er pocket picked," as ain't always a safe plan, as I knows myself thro' a-puttin' a 'arf-sov'rin there in a bus as slipped up my sleeve, and would 'ave been lost but for me a-feelin' it ticklin' me under my harm, as is where it 'ad been and slipped to, thro' me a-'avin' to 'old it up that 'igh for to stop the bus, with the conductor climbed up on the roof to get 'is fares with only 'is leg a-

danglin' down, and didn't seem to have no feelin' in 'is boot, as were all that were wisible of 'im thro' the bus door.

I started off in good time that next mornin', and wore my satin turk as I've 'ad by me many years, as is a olive-brown, and looks werry dressy and quite the fashion now they wears things that short, with my red shawl and bonnet trimmed with pink, as always did become me; and a-thinkin' to be put down at the werry door by a Greenwich Nelson, as I thought went up the 'ill, but were a-runnin' to Woolwich, so 'ad to get down at the werry foot, as is a good pull up even tho' you takes your time over it, as parties a-gettin' on is bound to, partikler with your breath short in 'ot weather, as is me all over.

It took me a good bit to get up that 'ill with all my takin' my time over it, but got to where Mrs. Duckett were a-lodgin' in werry good time, as I considers 'arf a 'our before dinner.

She've got werry genteel parlors, tho' small, and I should say stuffy, as is kep' by a pilot's widder, as seemed a dowdy old party, and not over neat, and 'ad a grandorter as waited while she did the cookin'; and no wonder that pilot were dead if she cooked for 'im, for of all the fried soles as ever I did see come up in this world it wero the one as that widder sent us, as wore as pale as hashes as

the sayin' is, and stuck to the bone like wax, thro' bein' underdone, and 'adn't see the sea, I should say, for many a long day, tho' kep' from petrification by bein' on the hice, as always spiles the flavour, exceptin' skate, as in course is used to it.

I should say as that widder never washed 'er 'ands and face, and must 'ave melted that drop of butter, as were only paste, with the sut a-fallin' and a tater as 'ard as a bullet in the middle; but wot put me most out were a roast duck as follered that burnt as 'ad every bit of 'is flesh roasted off 'is bones, and the sage and onion raw inside 'im, as in course did ought to 'ave been biled fust; and as to green peas, they was them things as they preserves in cans, as in my opiniou is only fit for the pigs.

Mrs. Duckett were quite put out at me not a-praisin' them, and says, "Why, they're the can peas, the same as you gets over in Merryker."

"Well," I says, "that ain't no recommenda-tion, for I don't consider as no wegetables is much account over there nor fruit neither."

"Oh!" she says, "don't speak agin Merryker when Duckett sees you, for he's mad arter them."

I says, "No doubt; but," I says, "he won't make me chaunge my mind about 'em in a 'urry."

She says, "Do 'ave a bit of cold gooseberry-pie."

I says, "No, I thank you."

She says, "It's from the pastrycook's."

I says, "So I should say by the sugar on the top," and must 'ave been made I thinks to myself by the flymarks last summer, and bottled gooseberries as I spotted thro' their dead looks.

Says Mrs. Duckett, "You 'ave made a bad dinner, but we'll 'ave a early cup of tea with a bit of cold 'am, 'cos I shouldn't like to give Mrs. Reardon," as were the pilot's widdler's name, "the trouble of cookin' agin."

I says, "Oh, pray don't let 'er cook no more on my account," for the werry thought of it made me 'eave, for she was a reg'lar dirty old rag-bag, and I'm sure 'er grandorter weren't much better, tho' a deal finer with 'er 'air all grease and frizzy curls.

We set a-talkin' a little arter dinner, and Mrs. Duckett she would make some of them Merrykin drinks, leastways, as she called such, but no more Merrykin drinks than me, thro' 'er not 'avin' no hice, nor nothink but whiskey and rum as she would mix together, and then wanted me to drink it, as I says to 'er, "Why, bless your 'art, 'arf a glass and I should be what Chloe were werry soon."

So I only takes a little whiskey alone, leastways with water, and then thro' it bein' pleasant weather, tho' windy, we went out on to Black'eath for to see the donkey-ridin', and all manner, as

there was crowds a-doin', as I always considers cheerful.

We 'adn't no sooner gone werry far than I found as walkin' wouldn't suit me with wind enuf to take you off your legs, so I says to Mrs. Duckett, "Suppose we was to 'ave one of them donkey shays, as we needn't go out of a walk in, and I takes and pints to one as would jest 'old us.

Up run a feller as 'ad got a rickety old thing a-draggin' arter 'im, and says, "'Ere you are, marm."

I says, "No, my good man, I do not want you, but the one with the yaller body."

Up comes the party as belonged to it, and says, "This is the one, marm."

I says, "Yes," a-pintin' to the yaller one.

He brings out a wuss one than the fust, as were tied together up the back with a clothes-line.

So I says to Mrs. Duckett, "It's as much as our lives is worth to go in that thing, as will go to bits, I'm sure."

So I says to the men, "I won't go in none but that yaller one."

A young feller comes up and says, "So you shall, marm, as is mine," and brings it across the road, when that other waggerbone slips off 'is coat and squared up to 'im, and were a-goin' to strike

'im in the face, when I put up my umbreller atween 'em, as caught the blow, and sent me a-staggerin' back on to Mrs. Duckett, as set down wiolent on the pathway with me on 'er lap, she give me a wiolent shove as sent me on my knees, and jest then the wind ketched my umbreller as flowed open, and would 'ave been carried down the 'ill like a steam ingin', only I 'eld on to it, as dragged me right into the middle of the road, all puddles.

To 'ear them donkey fellers laugh were enuf to aggrawate a saint, as the sayin' is; but I didn't mind, thro' not bein' a saint, and up I gets, and says, "I ain't a-goin' to be beat, so let's go;" and as Mrs. Duckett weren't 'urt, tho' I did not consider it a friendly act in her to 'ave give me that shove, as she said were the impulse of the moment, but mudded my gownd and grazed both my knees all the same for that.

So we both gets into that shay, as were drawn by one of them rough ponies as I don't think you could 'ave got a currycomb thro' 'is shaggy coat not to have saved 'is life.

He were a werry well-reg'lated animile, as the 'Merrykins calls it, with a rope round 'is muzzle, as that chap a-walkin' by 'is side wrenched at frequent that wiolent as were enuf to stifle 'im.

I says to Mrs. Duckett, as we were goin' along, "Ain't this agreeable?"

"Well," she says, "it might be, if you could manage jest not to set right on me."

I says, "I'll move with pleasure," and give myself a lift like a one side, when that driver says, "Set quiet, can't you; you'll be over in a minit."

Mrs. Duckett she was werry quiet company, so I talks to the young man as were a-walkin' close by me, and asks 'im a good deal about the place, till we got to where we'd agreed to turn, and then Mrs. Duckett she says, "I can't stand this no longer."

I says, "Stand wot?"

"Why," she says, "I'm cramped to death with pins and needles all down one side, and can't bear bein' set on no longer; besides, we shall 'ave the wind in our faces a-goin' back, as that umbreller of yourn will turn us over."

"Well," I says, "please yourself, as shall certingly not walk myself, with all them parties at their larks over the place with donkey ridin' and playin' their games, as I likes for to see but don't want to go among, for I considers them footballs as they're a-kickin' about is jest for all the world like cannons a-goin' off round you."

"Then," she says, "you go back in the shay, and I'll walk, and if you gets 'ome fust, tell 'em to

get the tea, that's a good soul;" and out of the shay she jumps, thro' bein' a little bit of a figger, and off she goes a-shakin' 'erself.

Jest close agin where we stopped was refreshments, so I told that young man as were with me to get 'isself a glass of ale and me the same, as drunk relishin' thro' the dust, as is all sand on Black'eath, and then to turn back 'omewards.

I certingly 'adn't no consumption of the strength of the wind till I come to face it, and as to 'oldin' up my umbreller I couldn't, and if that young man hadn't tied it to the shay, I do believe as I should 'ave been blowed out of it.

That pony were a werry uncertain temper, I should say, for at times he'd dawdle along the road, and then he'd take and break into a sort of a trot like, and run slap into the footpath, as made that there driver wrench 'is 'ead a good deal, and were a-goin' to kick 'im, as I wouldn't allow.

I says, "Leave 'im alone, and he'll go 'ome and bring 'is tail behind 'im, as the sayin' is."

"All right," says the young feller, as were a sulky party and didn't seem to see my joke, and he drops back for to light 'is pipe in 'is 'at 'cos of the wind, jest as I 'eard a somethink coming along werry sharp behind, as proved the mail-cart, as always goes along that quick.

No sooner did that mail-cart come abreast of my

shay, than if that there pony didn't take it into 'is 'ead as he wouldn't let it pass 'im, as were no doubt 'is nasty pride, and broke into a gallop like wild 'orses, and sent me werry nigh over the back of the shay with the jerk, as made me drop the reins and snapped the string as the umbreller were tied down with.

I give a loud scream for that young man, but, law, if he'd 'ad the wings of the wind, as the sayin' is, he couldn't 'avo overtook that pony, as scoured along like mad ever so far, and then run slap into that mail-cart and knocked the young feller out, and dashed us over into a ditch, a-rollin' me out, with a wheel off, as it's a mercy as the side I fell weren't the same side as that mail-cart, as would 'ave grounded me to powder under the wheels.

I felt werry stunified like when I set up, and 'eard that young feller in the mail-cart a-usin' all the frightful names as he could lay 'is tongue to, tho' not much 'arm done, for he picked 'isself up, and were a-drivin' off jest as the party as belonged to the shay came up with 'is abuse, a-sayin' he'd be fined for a-stoppin' the mail-cart, and as I'd been and done five pounds of damage to his shay and 'orse, not as the 'orse were 'urt a bit, for he were a-feedin' quiet on the bank, and only the wheel off the shay.

So I says, "My good man, I'm a-stoppin' jest close to where we got into your shay, as this is the address on it," and give 'im that pilot's widder's card; and now I says, "Get me my umbreller, and I'll walk 'ome."

He says, "Blow you and your umbreller too, pay me for the 'ire of the shay and the damidge, or I'll make you," and took and shook 'is fist in my face.

I'd only 'arf-a-sov'rin and a little silver, so I says, "Well, I'll give you five shillin's."

He says, "That won't do, I'll 'ave a pound."

I says, "That you won't, for I ain't got it; this 'ere 'arf-sov'rin' is all as I've got about me but eighteen pence and two thrippenny bits," and I says, "if you takes it from me it's 'ighway robbery, altho' it's a 'eath as we're on and not the 'ighway."

Well, arter a deal of jaw, he takes the 'arf-sov'rin', and sets about puttin' 'is whcel on, and off I went a-lookin' for my umbreller, as 'ad blowed out of sight right across the 'eath.

I walked on werry quietly ever so far, when I 'eard a deal of shoutin', and see a lot of fellers a-runnin' back'ard and for'ard, a-kickin' a ball about as didn't seem a-comin' my way, so on I walks.

All of a sudden they turned on me, sudden like,

and afore I 'ardly 'ad time to think that there ball flew slap in front on me, and in a minit them fellers, as was all roughs, come a-kickin' and a-fightin' afore me and behind me, and away they kicks the ball and goes off arter it, as made me say a-turnin' away, "A good riddance of bad rubbish."

I couldn't 'ave got twenty yards when I felt a wiolent blow in the back as reg'lar knocked the breath out of my body, and down I fell like any one shot with a bang like thunder, and them fellers all round me agin a-pullin' and a-kickin' at me like mad.

I rolled reg'lar over thro' them willins a-kickin' at me, and then found by them a-'ollerin' as I'd got the ball under me, not as it were much of a ball when they picked it up, jest as a perliceman on horseback come up, as made 'em all levant like steam, as the sayin' is.

I says, "'Elp, perliceman, for I'm nearly dead."

He says, "You must be drunk, I should say, to go on as you 'ave, a-jinin' a set of waggerboues as 'ave been and stole that foot-ball, and kicked it away from them as was a-playin' with it proper."

"Well," I says, "I knows nothink about it, as shall carry the marks of their nail-boots to my grave, partikler in my side, as is where one on 'em kicked at me most wiolent, a-tryin' to get the ball from under me, as they've been and smashed."

He says, "If it were under you no wonder it's

smashed; but now the best thing as you can do is to pick yourself up and get 'ome, and don't you let me see no more of your games;" and if he didn't take and turn 'is 'orse's 'ead away and ride off.

So I gets up, and givin' up all 'opes of the umbreller, and couldn't see nothink of the shay, I walks on and on, and never got to Mrs. Duckett's till it were close on six.

She were as short as pie-crust to me, as the sayin' is, as 'ad 'ad 'er tea and kep' mine warm for me; and when I told 'er what 'ad 'appened to me, says, "Wotever could you espect a-goin' out on Blackheath on Whit-Tuesday.

I says, "It were your own doin's, mum," for I felt 'urt with a cup of tea as were cat-lap, and only loo warm, with a bit of dry toast like leather.

She says, "My doin's, never! for I only thought as we'd walk out and jest give a look at the people on the 'eath, and come in to a early cup of tea, and never dreamt of your a-'irin' a shay, and a-goin' out on the rampage like that."

I says, "Me on the rampage?"

"Yes," she says, "a-goin' on like that on Black'eath in and out of a open shay, as you nearly squeezed me to death in, and went on arterwards a-drinkin' ale with that donkey boy, as I should 'ave been ashamed on you."

I never were more 'urt, as in course a friend a-

turnin' on you is wuss than a hopen foe, as the sayin' is.

So I says, "All as I can say, Mrs. Duckett, is as I'm sorry I come ; and as to the hale, it were only a glass ; and shall certingly go 'ome with a 'eavy 'art a-thinkin' of this day."

Well, that werry moment there came a knock at the door, and Mrs. Duckett she looks out of the winder, and says, "Oh ! my, if here ain't Duckett, as I wouldn't 'ave see you for the world, as he says 'ave been the cause of all our troubles." She says, "Pray step into the bed-room or anywheres till I can get you hout, or break it to him you're 'ere."

I says, "I don't want for to see Mr. Duckett, nor yet to step into your bed-room, mum, thro' 'avin' of my bonnet on, so can go," and I walks into the passage.

"Oh !" she says, "do go into the kitchen for a minit," as were at the end of the passage, "till I've let 'im in," as 'ad been and knocked three times.

So I says, "Werry well, I don't mind anythink for peace and quiet, and walks into that kitchen, as she shet the door on, and I could 'ear 'er let my lord in, abusin' of 'er for keepin' 'im waitin' so long, as she escused by a-sayin' as the landlady's dorter were out.

It weren't much of a kitchen for size, and smelt

of dirt and sperrits, partikler with a large clothes-'orse by the fire a-dryin' a counterpin, as I could see 'ad been down in the dirt thro' a-tryin' to dry it in the back gardin in a 'igh wind.

I listened for to 'ear Mrs. Duckett go into the parlour and shet the door, so as to walk out of the 'ouse, not as I were afeard of seein' old Duckett, as I knowed well as Brown could transport if he liked to ; but, law, them two began a-wranglin' in the passage, for she wasn't that there lamb as she did used to be afore goin' to Merryker, as 'ad give 'er a sperrit not to be put upon.

Well, while I was a-waitin' and a-waitin', all of a suddin that there 'orse wibrated wiolent as made me start agin and look behind it, and there, settin' in a Winsor-chair, were that pilot's widder fast asleep, and I'm sure the wuss for licker by the way as she woke up and a-starin' at me, and says with a 'iccup, " Wot are you a-doin' 'ere ?" and makes a grab at me as sent me back and that 'orse over.

I says, " Let go on me, and let me pick up the 'orse, or you'll 'ave it in flames."

She says, "'Elp, thieves ! you're the woman as come and looked at my fust floor last week, and pocketed a table-spoon. I know you agin," and begun a-screamin' and a-'iccupin' like mad, jest as I smelt that counterpin a-scorchin' behind me.

In rushes Duckett and 'is wife, a-'earin the noise

jest as it broke into a flame as he ketched up a pail of dirty water and sloshed all over it and down my back, as I'm sure were for the purpose.

I says, "'Elp, Mrs. Duckett, this drunken old wretch is a-stranglin' me," for I couldn't get away from 'er.

"Hallo," says Duckett, "wot's this mean; here Mrs. Duckett, you come out; I'll 'ave the perlice in," and if he didn't take and drag 'er to the street-door, and open, callin' perlice as 'appened to be two or three there.

Well, when they come in, tho' I'd managed for to pitch that old beast back into 'er Winsor chair, and stomp out the flames as that counterpin were bustin' out in, as scorched me a good deal about the stockin's, I couldn't see across that kitchen; so I took and throwed open the winder, for in course, as might be espected, the whole place were full of smoke, and that old beast were a-snortin' in a fit on 'er back.

I tried for to esplain what 'ad 'appened to the perlice as collared me, and I says, "The lady in the parlour as 'ave jest gone out will tell you as I'm respectable."

Says the perlice, "Then why was you gettin' out of the winder, and there ain't no one in the parlours."

I says, "I weren't a-gettin' out of the winder,

it's too small ; and as to the parlour let me go and see."

"No!" says they, "we don't lose sight on you," and they picks that old widder up and put in 'er chair.

Well by that time there was a reg'lar crowd round the 'ouse, and parties 'ad give the alarm of fire, and the engin' were a-comin' jest as that there old woman's granddorter come in as took on frightful, a-sayin' as we was all a gang as 'ad took the lodgin's for to rob the 'ouse, and that my pals 'ad been and bolted, and she give me in charge, and 'er grandmother as she brought to by a-dashin' a mug or two of cold water in 'er face, and didn't seem to care much about, she no sooner got 'er senses than she begun a-sayin' agin and agin, as I were the woman as 'ad stole the spoon the week afore, as 'er granddorter 'adn't seen thro' bein' out.

I says, "Wherever can Mrs. Duckett be got to for to let a friend be accused falsely like this."

Says that granddorter, "You know they 're gone as I dare say we shall find their boxes full of 'ay-bands and bricks."

I says, "They're both respectable parties, tho' they 'ave treated me shameful."

Says the perlice to that old woman, "Do you give this fieldmale in charge?"

She says, "Certingly."

I says, "Dare to, that's all, and see if I don't pay you out for it."

Says the perlice, "Don't use no threats."

I says, "I will, and do 'em too."

Says he, "Will you come quiet to the station?"

I says, "Never," for I was reg'lar roused like a worm as will turn when trod on.

"Then," he says, "we'll take you."

I says, "Dare to. I'll wait 'ere till Mrs. Duckett comes in."

Says the granddorter, "You shan't. Shall she, grandmother?"

The old 'ussey says, "Certingly not."

I says, "I won't stir."

So the perlice he spoke to the other, as went out; and I says to the other, "Now, perlice, it's all wrong, so let me out."

He says, "I don't see it."

I says, "Then I'll go," and makes a move to the door.

He says, "No, you don't," and steps afore me.

I give 'im a push out of the way, and gets into the passage.

He follers me up quick, ketches 'old on me by the wrists, and runs me into the parlour backards, and 'olds my arms down. In come the other, as slipped a thing like a bandage over my arms, and then the two pulls me out in the passage, throws me down

on a stretcher, and winds that bandage stuff round me quite tight afore I knowed 'ardly where I werc.

I says, "Perlice, for mussy sake, let me get up, and I'll go like a lamb anywheres."

"We ain't a-goin' to trust you no more till we searches you, as may be armed, for wot we knows."

"'Old up, Bill," he says; and if they didn't take and lift up that stretcher, and carry me slap out into the street.

If you'd 'eard the jeery shouts as there was, and a crowd all round me, as two more perlice 'ad to keep off, and the way as I were bein' jolted and jogged all along the streets, as it's a wonder as I didn't 'ave a fit afore they got me to the station 'ouse.

I think I did give 'em a turn wneu I got there, and they let me set up, for I turned that awful faint and staggersy as made the inspector send for a doctor; and when he come I busted into tears at the sight on 'im, a-sayin', "Why, surely it must be Mr. Gowland, as lived out Stepney way, as were 'sistant to Dr. Coddleslop."

"Why," he says, "if it ain't Mrs. Brown, the best uuss as ever I kuowed, and quite the lady, as I'll answer for, and I 'opes will step in and see my good lady, as am settled close by."

Them perlice did look foolish, tho' I said as it weren't their faults, but all old Duckett's spite,

as it turned out to be, for Mr. Gowland he went up to the 'ouse and found 'im jest come in, and made 'im come down to speak for me, as 'ad only gone out of the 'ouse, and made 'is wife come with 'im jest for to leave me in a 'ole like, as wanted to shake 'ands, a-pretendin' he 'adn't knowed me at fust.

So I says, "No, Mr. Duckett, I never were a friend of yourn, and never wish to be, and my 'usband will settle this and one or two more old scores with you; so now good night."

The inspector were werry perlite, a-sayin' he were sorry it were all a mistake; and Mr. Gowland he made me come into his 'ouse for to set myself to rights, and give me a composin' draught, and then 'ad a cup of real good tea with 'im and 'is wife, a werry nice young ooman as ever I see, as quite took to me like a mother, thro' not bein' in course that experienced, and made me stop to supper and see me into the 'bus, as took me to the Helefant, as I got a cab from 'ome arf a 'our afore Brown, as said he certingly would look Mr. Duckett up for 'is wile conduct. "Not," he says, "but wot I am surprised at you, Martha, a not awoidin' Black'eath, as ain't a place for a lady at Whitsuntide without a protector."

No doubt Brown is right; and that's why I always do think as it is best for to go a-pleasurin'

to some place as is properly looked arter, not a wild, open 'eath like that as did used to be all 'ighway robbers, as I'm sure I shall never forget.

Brown made Duckett pay up the money and make it all right with 'is wife's settlements—not as ever I wish to set eyes on either of 'em agin; but any'ow I've returned good for evil to 'er, as is my consolations, for I'm sure if I was to do as I'm done by thro' nearly every other party as I knows, I certingly should be maimed for life.

But as to Mrs. Duckett a-comin' to try and carney me over, a-sayin' as she'd been gross deceived by that dirty 'old toad of a landlady, when she got 'ome, and missed all the sperrits, as said she'd watched me a-drinkin' it out of the bottle, while Mrs. Duckett's back were turned, thro' the crack of the door, as was that beastly mixture as I wouldn't 'ave touched.

I says, "Whyever, Mrs. Duckett, did you take and believe a stranger as were nothing to you but furnished parlors, and turn agin your friend and leave that 'ouse?"

She says, "Duckett reg'lar dragged me out, a-sayin' it were in flames."

I says, "Then you left me to perish, as 'ave been your friend when in trouble, years ago." So I says, "There's my door, and the sooner you're the other side on it the better I shall be;" and

I walked out of the room and left 'er; for I do think as any one as would treat you like that is wuss than serpints.

So if I do go anywheres at Whitsuntide, it'll be somewheres on the quiet, as I likes to improve my mind, like 'Ampton Court, or Windsor Castle, or somewheres where you may pick up a somethink for to talk about, and not mere rubbish like donkey shays and swings, and sichlike, as don't do no good to neither body nor mind; and as to the clothes I've spilte, it's downright ruination, for that satin turk of mine wouldn't dye, and there was pitch or somethink on that stretcher as stuck to my shawl; and altogether I've 'ad my lesson. I shall always 'ope to 'ave my 'olliday outins, for I always says a 'outin does any one good, for pleasure is pleasure, if took in moderation, and it's a poor 'art as never rejoices, as the sayin' is.

MRS. BROWN AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

I WAS a-stoppin' for a day or two along with Mrs. Padwick arter I'd been at Madam Tussor's, and were a-sayin' 'ow lovely it were, when she says to me, "Martha Brown, did ever you see the waxworx in Westminster Abbey?"

I says, "When quite a child, I were took, and well remembers all them 'istorical parties in a glass case as looked that nat'ral as you might think it were them come to life agin, or only jest expired."

Says Miss Puttick, as is a werry nice creetur in 'er ways, but too much book-larnin' for me, "I don't 'old with waxworx, as is that unhartistic, and no use thro' bein' that perishable, so wouldn't never do for 'istorical subjects."

So I says to 'er, "All as I've got to say is, as I doats on waxworx, and if ever I 'ad my picter took it should be waxworx, as is a deal more beautiful than any of them paintin's, and twice as nat'ral, as in course is downright life; and as to bein' perishable, it's better than a picter cos it don't last so long, for I'm sure it's downright shameful for to

see them family paintin's in a broker-shop the same as I see Mr. and Mrs. Selsby, as kep' the "'Arf Moon,' oppersite Limens-Reach, as was both done by a painter as lodged in the 'onse over three months, and never paid 'is score, as certingly were beautiful, partikler 'ern, and sky-blue sating, and a yaller turbin, with a canary on 'er finger, and 'im in a blue coat and metal buttons, with a shirt-frill and a brooch as was jest like life, and when I see them both within a year of 'er death in a broker's-shop, it giv me sich a turn, for she didn't outlive 'im three years, and would 'ave bought 'em myself for chimbley-boards only some one 'ad been and shoved the top corner of a wardrobe slap thro' the two, as in course wouldn't anser for a chimbley-board with a 'ole in it and a strong down draft as there is in both my back rooms, and fills the place with smoke whenever there's a fire in the back kitchen.

The next day, arter an early dinner, me and Mrs. Padwick started for the Abbey, as is a easy walk thro' the two parks in front of Buckingham Pallis, as looks werry like a railway station shet up, now as Queen Wictoria don't never use it, and they do say as she would 'ave turned it into a' ospital for what they calls conwalessence, as is a fine thing for them as is gettin' well, only Parlyment wouldn't let 'er, as is that generons as she'd give away every-think to 'er last farthing, only but for them Acts of Parlyment, as makes her keep it all.

In course that 'ere pallis ain't no use to 'er, tho' a fine garding at the back, I've 'eard say, as would be nice for any out of a 'ospital; but she can't a-bear the sight on it, nor yet of anythink else as reminds 'er of 'er loss, as in course bein' a queen she ain't a-goin' to put up with like anybody else is obliged to.

When we got to that Abbey, they was a-singin' werry nice, as is werry sweet to 'ear, and the orgin played beautiful soft and altogether werry lovely; but jest as we was a-listenin' there was a end to the music, but a party kep' on a sayin' somethink sing-song like, as Mrs. Padwick said was the Puseyites' ways of sayin' their prayers, as she didn't 'old with thro' bein' a Wesleyan.

"Well, then," I says, "it's nothing to you, let 'em pray as they pleases;" but she didn't agree to that, but said she'd 'ave it pnt down if she 'ad 'er way.

"Ah," I says, "then there might be some as would like to put the Wesleyan way down, and 'ow would that suit you?"

Well, jest then they stopped what they was a-sayin', and all got up and went out, as was a Dean and Chapter, the verger said, as was a-goin' to show us over.

I says, "Are they werry old?"

He says, "Not so werry, for a many 'ave died off since I remembers, and," he says, "there's great changes."

"Yes," says Mrs. Padwick, "I remembers well when livin' in Great George Street, as is over five-and-forty year ago, it was a reg'lar thoroughfare thro' the Abbey, and 'ave often see a butcher with a tray of meat a-carryin' it thro' the door at Poets' Corner, as saved 'im a great round."

"Ah," says a party standin' by, "that was the time as it were all screened off beautiful, to keep off the draughts, and not throwed open like this, as is all Puseyite rubbish."

I says, "Oh, indeed! then whyever is it allowed?"

"Oh," he says, "I don't know; but all I got to say as if Dean Ireland 'ad lived, he'd never 'ave suffered it to be done."

"Ah," I says, "I've 'eard as they do things with a 'igh 'and in the Church in Ireland."

He didn't make no answer, for parties come up as we was all a-goin' together to be showed over the church, as is charged sixpence for, and certingly werry kind of that old gent as is the 'ead of the place to show us round with 'is own 'and; but he's evident proud on it, tho' he did say as the place 'ad been reg'lar ruined; and certingly I must say as a little whitewash wouldn't do it no 'arm, partikler them old tombs, as wants doin' up shameful bad.

I were that glad for to see some of them monyments as I'd 'eard tell about as was Queen 'Lizabeth,

as died thro' over 'eatin' 'erself in danein', as were werry foolish at 'er time of life, tho' in course thro' never 'avin' settled couldn't give up doin' the young gal, 'cos in eourse like all them old maids she 'ad 'opes as she might get an offer to the werry last, the same as old Miss Blowry, as married the taller ehandler's 'prentiss at sixty-five, and went to church in two wails as that fool of a boy 'ad never see 'er without, and took and bolted when she throwed it up in the westry for to sign the register, and is over in Merryker now.

And there was Mary Queen of Seots as was own sister to Queen 'Lizabeth, tho' never friends, as cut off 'er 'ead for murderin' 'er 'usban', as she never did, and if she 'ad, no business of Queen 'Lizabeth to interfere 'twixt man and wife, and wouldn't 'ave done it if she'd ever 'ad a 'usban' of 'er own, as is the wust of them family quarrels, as 'ave made parties bear mallis and not speak for years; but as to cuttin' your own sister dead like that, I don't 'old with it, nor yet with that werger's langwidge, a-eallin' 'er bloody Queen Mary, as I told 'im weren't a espression to use to a queen in a saered hedifice.

They showed us a good many kings' and queens' tombs, and some lovely monyments with death a-strikin' with 'is dart; but I do say as they did ought to put all the ritin' in English, 'cos you ean't make out all that Latin, and it's no use parties a-dyin' and leavin' a good esample be'ind 'em if it's all

done in Latin, as a gent told me they used 'cos it's one of the dead's langwidges.

"Well," I says, "preaps when dead myself I may understand it, but never shall this side the grave, as can't make much 'and at French, tho' that's lively enuf any'ow."

Well, we'd seen a good deal as was old, partikler 'Enry's Seventh Chapel, they said.

"Well," I thinks to myself, "in my opinion he'd better 'ave built one good church instead of so many chapels, as am not one myself as cares about them chapel-goers, tho' no doubt some on as good as church folks, like Mrs. Padwick, when sincere."

As to Edward the Confessor's Chapel, it's a downright wreck, and quite spilt thro' takiu' away the waxworx as I well remembered a-seein' Lord Nelson, tho' as yaller as a kite's foot, as the sayin' is, and a lot more as 'ave been all sold for kitchen stuff, as ain't a-treatin' any one with respect in their last moments, and I'm sure there's a many as is in Westminster Abbeyes didn't ought to be, and a many ain't there as did ought; for wherever is Miss Biffins' monyment as were one of the seven 'undred wonders of the world, as 'adn't neither harms nor legs, and yet cut out watch-papers with 'er feet, and wrote a lovely 'and, as only shows wot persewerance will do, and cleaned 'er teeth by 'avin'³ of 'er tooth-brush tied to the bed-post, and knelt on the foot of the bed for to use it, as must 'ave been like playin' the

pan-pipes, poor thing, as shows any one to be clean in their 'abits.

I'm sure you might spend days over that Westminster Abbey, for to read all them monyments and 'ear all about them men as is berried there, as the werger said was great gen'als and statesmen, and one on 'em was Mr. Wilberforce, as inwented the slave-trade, and looks as if he 'ad a somethink on 'is eonshenee as made 'im grind is teeth and twist about so ; and there was the man as inwented the steam-ingin and waecination, as some parties don't 'old with now-a-days, tho' I'm sure I well remember 'earin' my dear mother talk about 'noculation, as give it you nat'ral, and werry often them as didn't die was pitted frightful all their lives, and often blind with one eye, if not both, and their 'earin' gone.

" Ah," I says to Mrs. Padwiek, "it's all werry grand, no doubt, for to come to be berried in Westminster Abbey, as was Lord Nelson's dyin' wishes, if not the 'Wietory,' as were 'is wessel ; but," I says, "in my opinion this 'ere ehurch would look a deal better without them monyments—not as I should like to 'urt anyone's feelins, but," I says, "they looks werry much in the way, and must be when there's a oratorio or a eoronation, as is all as it's any good for, thro' bein' that large size, as my dear mother remembered both, partikler George the Fourth, as were a reg'lar mockery altogether,

tho' a fine sight, I've 'eard say, for 'im to kick up a row about 'is wife's bad be'aviour—not as 'im a-bein' bad was any escuse for 'er, 'cos two blacks don't make a white, as the sayin' is; and I've 'eard say, tho' can't remember myself, as he looked werry grand a-walkin' in percession, with 'is crown on, over a new curly wig as he wore thro' not a-bearin' a bald 'ead, 'cos close on sixty when he come to the throne, tho' air-apparent for many years.

There's the chair as he sat in, and Queen Wictoria too, as come from Scotland, as is wot makes the Scotch that proud, a-sayin' as the King of England were fust King of Scotland.

In course there's a deal to see in that Abbey—not as I could 'ear it all, tho' the party as went round with us were werry kind esplainin' of things, but I couldn't 'elp a-sayin' as I did think as nobody did ought to be berried there but them as 'ad done good.

So says a gent as 'ad told me one or two things werry perlite, "No more there ain't."

I says, "Go along with yer, if you'll escuse my free ways, as forgot myself; but," I says, "do you mean to say as them kings did everythink as was good?"

"Why," he says, "don't you know as the King can't do no wrong."

I says, "Oh! can't he," I says, "that won't do for any one as 'ave 'ad 'istry read to 'em like me, as

'ave 'eard all about fair Rosamond and the Princes in the Tower, and that Old 'Arry as murdered 'is wives by the score, let alone Queen 'Lizabeth, and I don't consider as Queen Anne were much better myself, and I could tell you of dozens more; and no wonder they're bad if they're brought up with them ideers, as I'm sure Queen Wictoria never would allow in 'er nursery, 'cos look at the Prince of Wales and all the Royal family as well knows they can do wrong when they comes to be King, as is wot makes 'em so steady now, 'cos as the twig's bent the tree's inclined, as the sayin' is."

Well, me and this gent was a-talkin' like that when we stopped, and a party says, "Well, we've been over it, but I'm blest if I knows anythink about wot I've seen, for this old woman's clack, as 'ave been incessant."

"Yes," says the party as 'ad showed us over, "she be a good one for a werger, for she seems to know all about it."

"Well," I says, "I did ought to, for I've knowed them as 'ave lived in this werry Abbey as were under-'ousemaid to the Dean and Chapter, and did used to tell me all about 'Andel's festival, as she were quite a gal, and 'eard 'the 'evans a-tellin'" thro' the roof, with Mr. Braham a-'ollerin' 'Let there be light,' jest as the sun come out, with King George and Queen Charlotte, and all the fust of the land, as 'ad to set up two nights to 'ave their 'air

dressed in time, and some of them Court 'airdressers never 'ad their clothes off for a week, as were a-runnin' about a-powderin' and a-puffin' night and day, and ladies never a-goin' to bed thro' bein' afraid to lay down on their toupees, as was a tremengous 'ight over your 'ead, and obligated to be in their places long afore daylight to be in time, and fainted by the score afore the day was out thro' the music bein' that long as lasted till night set in, and not over then, if any one 'ad waited to the end."

So that werger he said, "A old woman's tongue is a wonderful thing."

I says, "That's right that is, tho' I'm not so old as you, I'm pretty sure, as I've forgot more things than you ever knowed, and 'owever should you know much shet up in this 'ere place, as is no better than a symmetry, from June to January, tho' in course you've plenty of time for thinkin' over the past ; but," I says, "for my part there ain't no time like the present, as the sayin' is."

"Yes," says the werger, "and that's why I'm a-goin' to wish you good-day and 'ave my tea."

I says, "But surely we aren't seen all on it, not as I wants to go out on the roof, 'cos in course there can't be nothink to see them 'Ouses of Parlyment in front, as I well remembers a-seein' burnin' myself from the Gray's-Inn Road, where me and my dear mother was a-drinkin' tea that werry hevenin', on the top of the 'ouse, as I've 'eard say were all thro'

a tallyman's carelessness, as is a party I never did care about myself, and can't think as Parlyment did ought to 'ave 'ad any dealin's with 'im as is always payin' thro' the nose work.

I must say as I should like for to be left to wander about that there Abbey alone, as is werry solemn, partikler them cloisters, as is all shet up places now, as did used to be kep' by them old monks as is now a school, and J've 'eard say, wonderful pancakes as they tosses over a bar every Shrove Toosday, as is a old hancient custom as I likes to see kep' up, but is all a-bein' put down now-a-days, and I says to Mrs. Padwick, "No doubt this 'ere Abbey will be turned into a picter gallery or somethink like that."

"Oh," says Mrs. Padwick, "don't talk to me, for I wouldn't 'ave come if I'd knowed it, and never was so disappointed in my life."

I says, "Wotever about?"

"Why," she says, "to think as they've been and took away the waxworx, as is wot I partikler wanted to see, thro' a-thinkin' as I should see all them kings and queens from Queen Victoria downwards."

"Oh!" I says, "you can see them any day, and much better at Madam Tussor's."

"Oh," she says, "Madam Tussors is werry grand, but it ain't Westminster Abbey, as I considers the nat'ral 'ome of kings and queens when dead and gonc."

" Ah !" I says, " right you are ; but," I says, " livin' kings and queens is turned out of their nat'ral 'omes now-a-days that constant that no wonder they won't let 'em rest in their graves, and did ought to respect death ; and as I'm sure waxworx is that like as it's the next thing to it ; but," I says, " I fully expects to 'ear as they've put down all the churches the same as Ireland, and do away with them wergers, as I 'ave 'eard say as this 'cre Dean, if he 'ad 'is way, would pretty soon make a clean sweep of the lot, leastways, that's what some says, as would in course be the church in danger with no one to look arter it, as must require constant keepin' up, thro' bein' that size as must take a deal of dustin' and sweepin' ; and I must say as them boys sings wonderful sweet, tho' not a place as I should care to stop in long myself thro' a-strikin' that chill as made me and Mrs. Padwick thankful for to get 'ome to our teas, as seemed to warm us up agin ; and 'owever them parties can live in that there Abbey constant, I can't think, as only shows as you can get used to anythink, for use is second natur as the sayin' is, not as no natur would ever make me take to Westminster Abbey for a constancy, tho' all werry well once in a way, as the sayin' is."

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